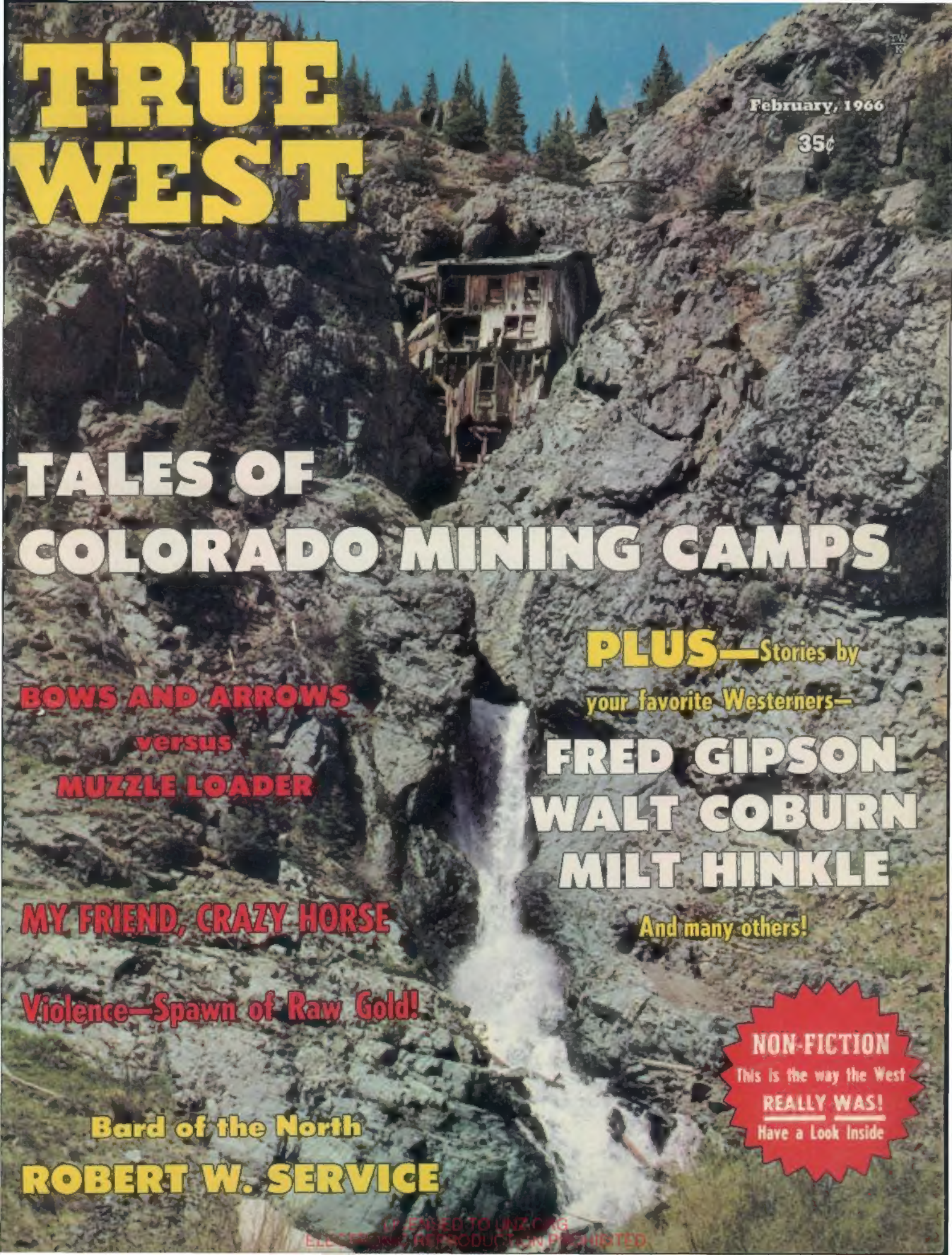

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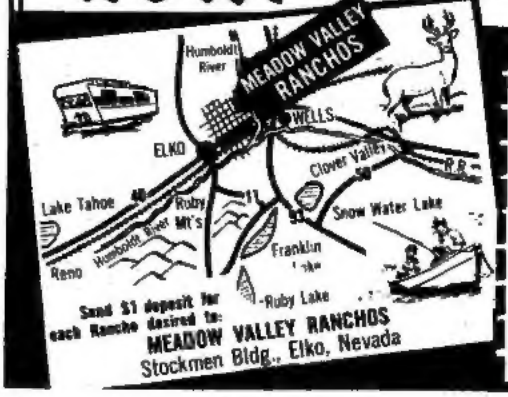

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Indicate No. of Ranchos____ Total enclosed $____

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Western Brands
TW 2
Estes Park, Colorado

January-February, 1966
Volume 13, No. 3
Whole No. 73

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

PAT WAGNER Editor	JOE AUSTELL SMALL Publisher	ROBERT SMALL Advertising
LIZ LAWLER Production	LESTER U. BEITZ Art	MARILYN WHITE Circulation

"The files of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are going to be of great historical value and should be preserved in all the libraries of the country."—Walter Prescott Webb, former President, American Historical Association.

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Cover: Mystery Mine near Silverton, Colorado
Courtesy Eastern Photo Service (Bishop)

A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

TRUE WEST is published bi-monthly by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, INC., P.O. Box 3668, 1012 Edgecliff Terrace, Austin, Texas 78704. 35c per copy, $4.00 for 12 issues in the United States and Possessions and Canada. $5.00 for 12 issues in all other countries. Second-class postage paid at Austin, Texas. Copyright 1965 by WESTERN PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Three weeks' advance notice and old address as well as new are required for change of subscriber's address.

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THIS IS the first time we haven't had a pretty good inkling on what to do about a given situation and, as per usual, we are coming to you readers for an answer. Generally, we've got a pretty good idea of how to stay in the magazine business (and anybody who tells you it isn't about the toughest there is, send him along for some lessons!) but this one has us stumped right now and we dad-burned sure need some help in figuring it out.

You remember we got so many letters asking for reprints of the hard-to-get first issues of TRUE WEST that we threw out a feeler and the vote was nearly 100%. So we came out with OLD WEST—all meat and no bones. We added a rare old book in each issue, some brand new articles that we have had readers tell us topped anything we ever did in TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES, and tried all in all to stir up a stew that would make your taste buds swell out like toadstools after a refreshing rain.

Well sir, it has worked beautifully—off and on. That's what we can't understand, the "off and on" stuff! One issue will sell like we should have printed twice as many and maybe the next issue falls considerably short.

The first time we hit a slow issue we put out a vote on whether we should run advertising or not. We nearly got washed down the river from the deluge. If I remember right, in this sea of letters we got two saying they really enjoyed the advertising in TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES and would like to have it in OLD WEST. The rest preferred that we use the space for more stories so we went along with the majority. Now, we sure ain't against advertising, podner! It fills in some gaps—but you readers could do that just as well.

Naturally, you know what is coming up next. You figure I am going to *tell* you how. You would get the first big shock of your reading of the Hosstail Publications if I didn't!

This "gap" I am talking about is money. We can take the sweetest letters in the world from our readers, show them to the printer and he says, "Yeah, ain't this nice—where's my check?" Now we love these wonderful letters and we haven't gone broke yet and I think it's mainly because everytime we have asked for help, by golly, you have given it in great big doses! You have told us over and over how wonderful it is to be able to buy *one* magazine composed of 100 pages of solid reading and illustrative material. The help we need this time is for you folks to *buy solid*. In short, the best we can figure it out is there are some issues you skip, can't find or just overlook some way. Many write in that they cannot find OLD WEST on the newsstands. As in the case of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES, if you can't find them in the clutter and pull them out, you might ask the news dealer about the situation. Best of all, call your local wholesaler who is generally listed under "Magazines—Wholesalers," in the yellow pages. Or your news dealer can always tell you who he is.

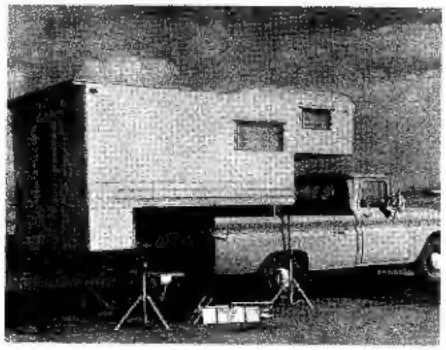
BACK to this on and off thing. One reason could be what several readers have pointed out recently—so many do not identify OLD WEST with TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES. So we are publishing identification right under the title from now on. Another reason could be that OLD WEST gets buried and needs to be pulled out. The third, of course, is what I just mentioned—sometimes you don't get around to the newsstands. This is a very important item. IF WE COULD MAKE SALES ON ALL ISSUES LIKE WE HAVE ON ABOUT HALF, WE WOULD BE HEADED ACROSS THE PASTURE LIKE AN OLD BELL COW IN HEEL-FLY TIME! The good sale on one issue, lower sale on the next is what puzzles us. If it was a bad sale right on down the line, the answer would be simple—just flat stop publishing. However, some sales are so good that they out-strip TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES even! Readers write us that dealers have sold out, to add more copies—but there must have been a bug in the radiator somewhere because maybe that particular issue didn't sell as well as the one before! We get an uncomfortable amount back and we wonder how they could have sold out if all these returns are there in evidence.

That's why we have brought our troubles to our readers and if you folks don't clear it up—it'll be the first time! You know, there is not a sane publisher in this country who would admit he isn't flat taking the country by storm! To say that one of your issues might have had a bad sale (with everybody else but this particular nitwit!) would be like sticking your hunkus in the fire and throwing on a solid back-log! But I just tell you truthfully what is going on, and we generally work it out to the satisfaction of everybody and plod along doing our very durndest.

What we can't understand is that we get such terrific letters on OLD WEST commenting on the long, thorough articles, the old books they can't get elsewhere and the short features and formula as a whole. Then there comes an

(Continued on page 72)

CAMPER JACKS



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True Western

Hackberry Johnson

Dear Joe:

I really got a big kick out of the story as told by Hackberry Johnson in the August issue of TRUE WEST. I never did know what his last name was, but attended the rodeos he put on in Brownwood, and always liked his show. At the 1921 show, I was just turning nineteen and wanted to be a cowboy, having rode a few broomtailed ponies, and thought sure I could compete with the real riders. I wanted to ride in Hack's show, but he told me I was just too young, and go home and get grown. My father was a M. D. and I told him what Hack said, and he told me he was right, and for me to stay off those horses or I would get killed.

One thing Hackberry didn't mention was his horse "Jim Nail," and I wondered if he is the horse he used to pick up on (in the picture where Billy Seals was up behind him). He would snub this horse up to another horse, and put the saddle on him, and as soon as he was released and the rider was up he would buck like a ball of fire. Then Hack would go and get on Jim Nail and ride him back as gentle as a lamb. The last time I saw either of the Seals girls was in 1953 at Coleman at an American Legion dance. I always thought Curly Seals had the prettiest hair, and was kind of jealous of Hack, as he got a good deal of attention from them.

I also knew Marshall Ratliff, and his brother Lee. Marshall took top money at our little July rodeo in Bangs once. Hack didn't mention Wild Cat Bill or Checker Benard, two pretty good bronc stompers. I liked Wild Cat's style; he was a little man, and could really ride the worst ones, but he could also tell the biggest lies I ever heard. I got a big kick out of the tall tales he would tell after the show. I never learned what his last name was, and I don't think he was much of a cowboy, except for riding, as he was too lazy and had rather be in a dice game. My favorite bronc stomper was Fred Alvord. He could ride the worst ones and talk all time they were bucking.

I would like to see Hack sometime and talk over those good old days. Wishing you and Hack all the success in the world. —Steve Sonendriker, 3325 Hiawatha, Fort Worth, Texas.

Dear Sir,

I enjoyed "55 Years a Rodeo Tramp" by Hackberry Johnson very much. I am an old Coke County rabbit twister. I knew Hackberry and several of the men he tells about. I have worked in the oil fields for many years.

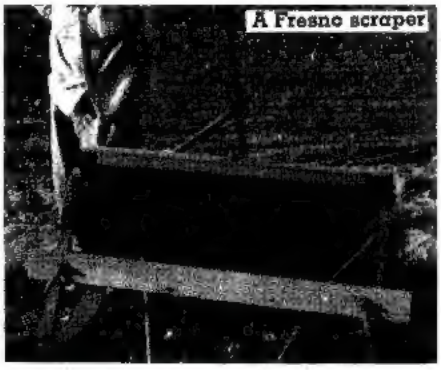
If anyone sees this who attended the Mineral Springs or "Possum Trot" school in 1913-14-15, I would like to hear from them.—Earl Brock, 322 W. Avenue A, Lovington, New Mexico.

Hackberry's Lost His Fan Mail

Dear Joe:

Hackberry Slim Johnson just says thanks to his many old friends as well as new ones who have written their comments on his story, "55 Years a Rodeo Tramp" found in the August, 1965 issue of TRUE WEST. I had planned to answer every one but, unfortunately, I lost my brief case with all these wonderful letters.

One letter, in particular, I hated to lose was from a lady in Corsicana, Texas. Her maiden name was Cantrell. They lived on the Leon River north of Temple. In 1912, at the age of five, she was bitten by a big rattlesnake on or just below the knee. I rushed to her and applied my old bandana as a tourniquet and asked that someone bring me a sharp knife. Somone brought me a razor and I split each wound where the fangs went in. I sucked the blood and poison several times. The doctor was slow to get there as that was in the horse and buggy days. She asked in her letter if I was Hackberry Slim. If she will write me again, I will be happy to see her the first time that I go up her way.—Hackberry Slim Johnson, 2002 Wilson Street, Austin, Texas 78704.



A Fresno scraper

Subscription Swindles

Dear Sir:

I have just read the letter of Mrs. Victor E. Mobley, Rangley Route, Meeker, Colorado. We in Wyoming have also felt the sting of this fraud, but it was on June 12, 1963. In our area this man seemed to hit each place that did not have a telephone and he received as much as $54.00 from one person and $52.00 from us and slightly lower amounts from several others. He gave the same story as the one to Mrs. Mobley. Our subscription was for forty-eight issues of each—FRONTIER TIMES and TRUE WEST and two other magazines.

After getting our check in his hands, he remarked that it might possibly take ninety days to process this and start receiving our magazines—which we thought rather odd but failed to check into until the ninety days were about up. At that time I wrote to the address given—International Readers' Service, 1450 Madison Avenue, New York 33, New York—and received my letter back stating there was no such address. So, like Mrs. Mobley, we took the letter, check and receipts to the sheriff and in just three days we were informed that he had been picked up on forgery and car theft and is serving a ten-year sentence in the Idaho State Penitentiary at Twin Falls. When that sentence is completed he will be brought to Wyoming to face charges here. He had three aliases that we know of. This is apparently an organized ring with a very legitimate looking identification.

In case this fraud has not been broken up and with the hopes it may help you in your investigation, we are willing to send the subscriber's receipts but would like them back as we will need them later, we hope. We are only sorry that you were not informed of this sooner as apparently it has gone further than realized.

We went ahead and subscribed through Western Publications, Inc. and have renewed again for this year and will continue to as we think FRONTIER TIMES and TRUE WEST are TOPS.—Mrs. John H. Auer, Rawlins Route, Box 55, Lander, Wyoming.

Here's another! This may have been a ring and if they operated from Colorado up into Wyoming no telling how many people were stuck. I am going to publish this letter in all three magazines since our subscribers evidently need a lot of warning.

Look, folks, when somebody tries to sell you a long-time subscription (like thirty to forty-eight issues of each, for instance) get wise in a hurry. Most people, after they are stuck, will never write the magazine. Yet if everybody would do that, it would stop this sort of thing in a hurry.—Joe.

Maybe Pictures Do Lie

Sir:

In a back issue of TRUE WEST there's a picture of what you call a Fresno scraper. I must tell you that it is not a Fresno, it is an old time Wheeler. I know this because I have used them myself. I am sending you a snapshot of a real Fresno so you can see the difference. —Claude Haggerty, P. O. Box 203, Bryn Mawr, California.

(Continued on page 69)

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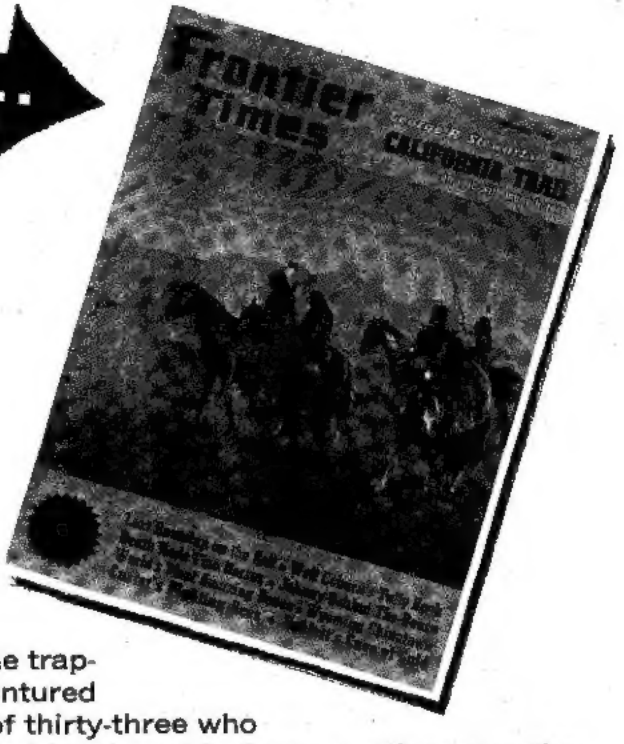
THIS IS THE ONE...

YOU MAY HAVE MISSED...IF SO, LATCH ONTO IT RIGHT PRONTO BECAUSE, LIKE **TRUE WEST** AND **OLD WEST**, IT CONTAINS THE MOST FACTUAL, EXCITING WESTERN READING IN THE WORLD!



HERE ARE SOME OF THE STORIES AND FEATURES THAT MAKE UP THE CONTENT OF THIS ISSUE:

THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL by George R. Stewart. In '40 the trappers held their last great rendezvous; in '41 emigrants ventured across the Rockies. Here is the story of the first party of thirty-three who took their chances where the creak of wheels had never been heard before—south across the desert and its rivers of sand. **LAST ROUNDUP ON THE BELL by Fred Gipson.** You can parcel up the ground and parcel up the cattle—but what do you do about the men who can't move on? **DEATH RODE FINE HORSES by Lou Gilstrap.** The Dragoons' gay uniforms were to turn into shrouds—gray folds of dust sewn quickly by the briar hands of a hostile land. **CRACK THE WHIP! by George E. Virgines.** Graceful or deadly—it can be either one if manipulated by an experienced man. **BENEFACTOR OR TYRANT? by E. Bangert.** Jim Hill was really not too concerned about being "loved." He was in a tough business and he liked it that way! **JOHNNY-BEHIND-THE-DEUCE by Lin Searles.** Although his only claim to success was a highly professional disappearing act, this boy with the swashbuckling name has become a legend in the Southwest. **BEST COON DOG IN THE HILLS! by F. M. Hover** as told to Leola Lehman. From twilight 'til moonset Seymour sped through the hollows like a bullet finding its mark. A run like this sure makes a man lonesome for the rustle of leaves and the first nip of autumn. **SOD HOUSE FRONTIER BOXING CHAMP by Paul D. Riley.** Young Lute McCarty—who remembers him now? Yet, some have rated him the Number One heavyweight, this kid who had never known anything but cowboying and life in a medicine show. **THE SHERIFF WHO OUTSMARTED THE MOB by Sharon Wilson.** Long after Jesse Phillips had put down his badge, he became deputy warden of the state prison and "When I went there," he said, "I met an awful lot of men for the second time." ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: **WYOMING CHINATOWN by Clifford C. Stuart, Jr., THE DEADWOOD STAGE by Lester U. Beitz, I SAW THE WORLD'S MOST AMAZING RACES by A. L. Schafer, GHOST TOWNS OF CONTRA COSTA by William S. Furno, CUSTER'S FIGHTING REES by Dale T. Schoenberger, SUBLETT'S CAVE OF GOLD by Mildred Carson Muller and EL FORTIN by Lee Myers.**

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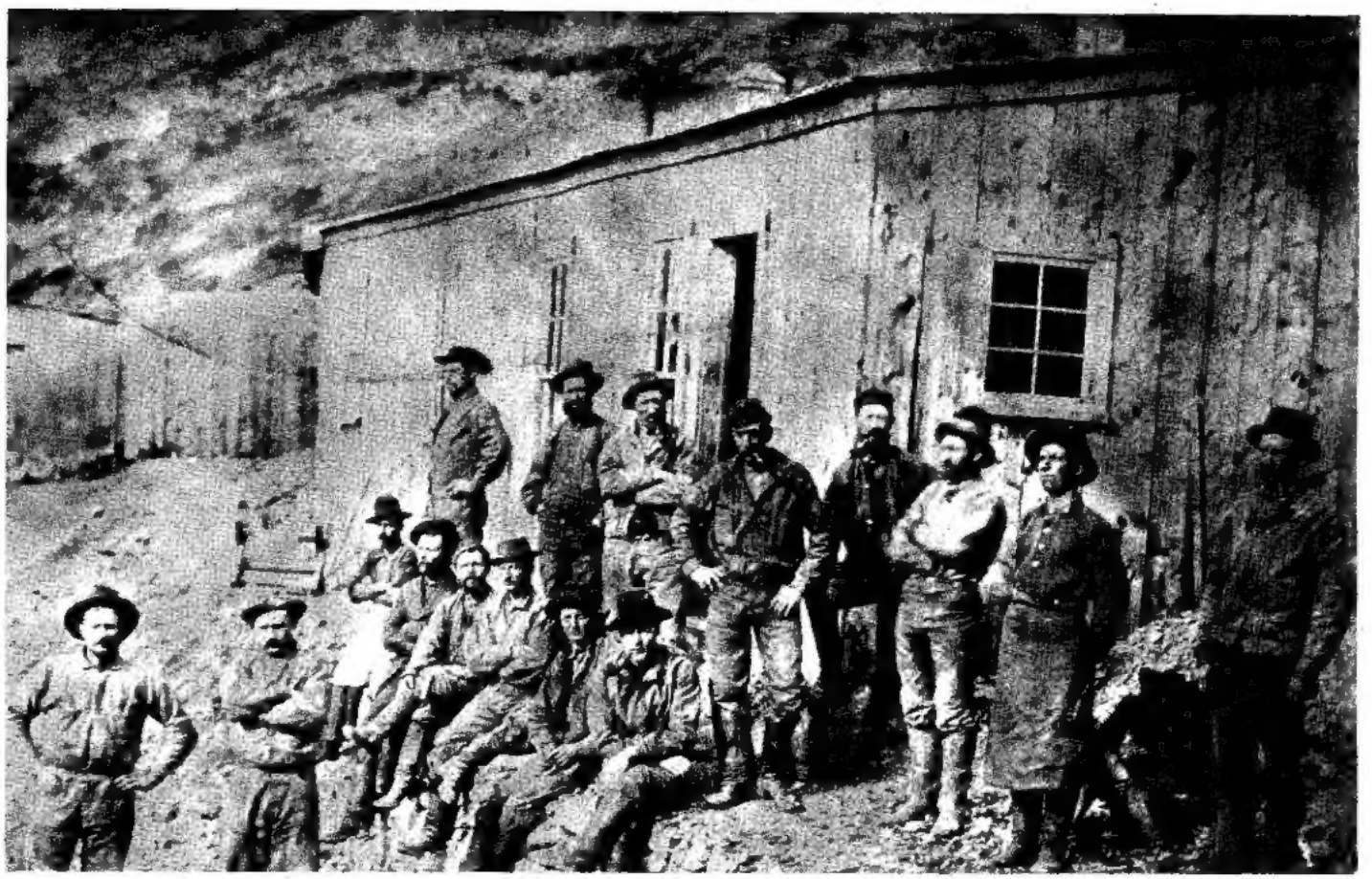

Courtesy Leadville Lead Corporation

Sixteen miners from the Last Chance (later Hilltop) Mine, during the middle 1880s

TALES of COLORADO

GET AN OLD prospector or miner in a talkative mood and he'll load you up with enough stories, tales and legends to fill several volumes. Like anyone else he likes variety and he will dredge up yarns ranging from humorous to macabre. Nearly always there are some historical ties; nearly always it is impossible to completely verify them.

You run into a bit of difficulty when you take a story from one source and try to match it with another. No two people ever remember or tell a story the same way.

Denver had a first-class mystery on its hands back in 1866, the kind which pops up in the annals of Scotland Yard. A stranger, presumably a miner out of the hills, dropped into town and paid for a suite of rooms in advance. His name is not given in the *Rocky Mountain News* story of September 5, and for a very good reason.

A freedwoman, acting as landlady of the rooming house, suspected that something might be wrong when the man didn't leave his rooms for two or three days, not even at mealtime. As far as she knew he had not left his quarters since checking in. He brought nothing but a sort of knapsack, with a change of clothes, and she never heard him moving around inside. It seemed wise to notify the authorities. When the police received no reply to their insistent knock, they broke down the door.

A gruesome spectacle greeted them. A body lay on the bed, apparently the victim of foul play. The police suspected murder and called in the coroner. Strangely enough, the coroner pronounced the case a suicide, and a letter on top of the nightstand substantiated his conviction.

The note read: "I have put an end to my life—I was tired of existence in this ungrateful land—and I left it of my own free will. There is money in my drawer sufficient to pay my funeral expenses. As to my name, try not to discover it. To prevent identification, I have hidden my head where you will never find it."

And that was the mystery, for when the police broke down the door, they found a headless corpse, and notwithstanding the fact that the head was never recovered, the case was officially determined to be a suicide! And how did a man lop off his own head, take it out and hide it, and come back to his rooms, without leaving some clues? Well, I'm sure I don't know.

"Pretty Jack" McEcheran lived up to his "pretty" tag. He had a way with the ladies, but he soon tired of any one individual. Jack drifted around the various mining camps of Colorado, and he particularly liked Leadville—there were so many fun-loving girls in that lusty town. Sundays found him at church, a fresh flower in his lapel, a fresh shine on his shoes, a fresh smile on his face, but he didn't attend for the sake of an inspirational sermon. Hardly! Nice girls were a challenge. He liked nice girls on Sundays, the other kind on weekdays.

A handsome fellow, McEcheran had a boyish charm. Outwardly, he seemed like a friendly, jovial, convivial fellow; inwardly, he was a scoundrel. Work never appealed to him so he never worked. But he always had money—too much money for a fellow who wasn't gainfully employed.

When Jack was apprehended for counterfeiting in April, 1914, he was asked plenty of questions, and given time in the hoosegow to think up some answers. *The Herald Democrat* of Leadville tells of several occasions when he was found in local business establishments, after hours, helping himself to merchandise or money in the safe.

Pretty Jack's first crime catapulted him into prominence. Jack had married a lively Leadville lady who liked the thought of a fast buck as well as he did, and together they hatched up a scheme to make a killing. Their plan began with an exorbitant life insurance policy for Jack, with his pretty wife as beneficiary. Next Jack leased a nearby mine. People were pleasantly surprised to see Jack leaving the house every morning, heading for the mine.

The McEcherans now waited for an opportune moment. What they needed was a body to substitute for Pretty Jack; what they needed was a funeral. Funerals came at frequent intervals in Leadville so there was little delay. During the night

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MINING CAMPS

Good men and bad men and desperate men, here is how they handled the "yellow temptation"!

By DEN GALBRAITH

they dug up the body and hauled it out to Jack's mine. The next morning Jack kissed his wife goodbye, made certain several people saw him heading for the mine, propped the body against the face of the tunnel, set off a round, and left town for a prearranged hideout.

That night Mrs. McEcheran reported that her husband hadn't returned from the mine. Could something have happened? She was worried. It wasn't like Jack to work so late. Maybe he had met with an accident. Would they find out if something was wrong? Sure, they would look around. They smiled knowingly as they left and started for the bars. Knowing Pretty Jack's habits, they made the rounds of the saloons. No Jack. No one had seen him. They checked all his old hangouts, visited some of his ex-lady friends. Still no Jack. As a last resort they went out to the mine. Leadville had another funeral, with the wife contributing some realistic, heartrending theatrics and sound effects. The insurance company paid off.

Everything had gone rather smoothly, and all Jack had to do was to stay out of sight until his wife could leave town and join him without arousing any suspicion. Everything might have turned out fine, except that Jack's wife had found a new boyfriend and begun a lively affair. She bought expensive gifts for her lover and they took to hitting all the spots in town, spending money recklessly.

Word got to Jack, and he was hopping mad. If there's anything an unfaithful husband can't stand, it's an unfaithful wife. He slipped back into town one dark night to put an end to the affair—particularly that part about spending his money—and got picked up by the authorities.

He might have been caught eventually, anyway. A detective employed by the insurance company felt something funny had transpired. After all, the policy had been an unusually large one and the accident had occurred just a few days after it went into effect. The strangest part of all was the fact that Jack had been working.

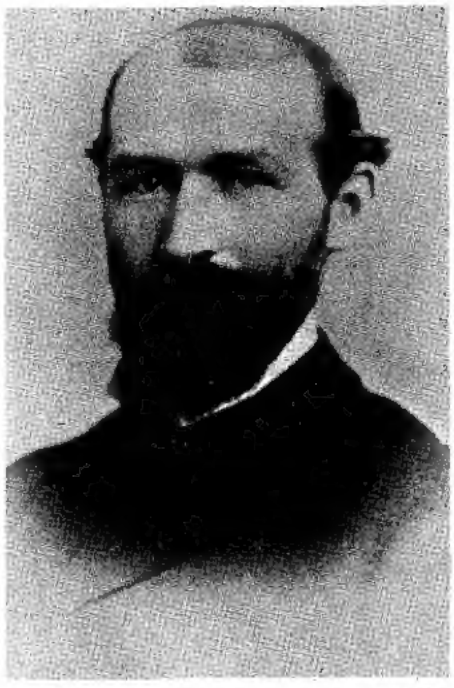
Snooping around and questioning everyone who had attended the funeral, the private eye learned that a couple of people remembered that the corpse had had black hair—Jack's was fiery red. They exhumed the body. Sure enough, black hair. Then someone recalled that one of the pallbearers had red hair.

Later, it evolved that Pretty Jack, with a bit of disguise, had been unable to resist the temptation of attending his own funeral. He wanted to find out how the charming girls of Leadville would react to the fact that he was gone.

LIKE Stonewall Jackson, George B. Robinson had a mental lapse, forgot his own instructions, and got shot down by one of his own men. Robinson, at that time a Leadville merchant, had grubstaked two old prospectors, Charley Jones and Jack Shedden, in the early summer of 1878, and bought out their interests for a "song" when they made an unimpressive-appearing strike on the southeast flank of East Sheep Mountain, about a mile from Kokomo.

The dubious-looking prospect became the Robinson Mine, one of the important properties in the Kokomo (Tenmile) mining district, with several million dollars to its credit. The name Robinson got spread around with the Robinson Consolidated Mining Company, the Robinson limestone, and the town of Robinson. By '79 the Robinson Mine showed definite promise, and late in the year struck "bonanza" ore. Like many others who suddenly stumbled onto an important producer, Robinson almost immediately became involved in a legal battle. The case went to court. In 1880, the popular Robinson was elected lieutenant-governor of Colorado.

While Robinson waited for a court decision, he hired guards to protect his property, for adverse parties threatened physical action. The mine became an armed camp. One of the guards, Ben F. Rich, told this story to John Devine, who in turn told it to me. Devine, a lost-gold-mine-hunter partner of mine, still owns property in the Kokomo district.



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George B. Robinson, ex-lieutenant governor of Colorado, protected his mine in such an effective manner that it cost him his life.

Rich came to Kokomo as a young fellow and spent most of his life mining. He worked on the Colonel Sellers, lost his health in the Queen of the West, and made a small fortune with the Felicia Grace.

"I asked Ben about the money he made on the Felicia Grace, one time. I knew, of course. He admitted he lost it all play-

Fairplay, Colorado, in the 1870s

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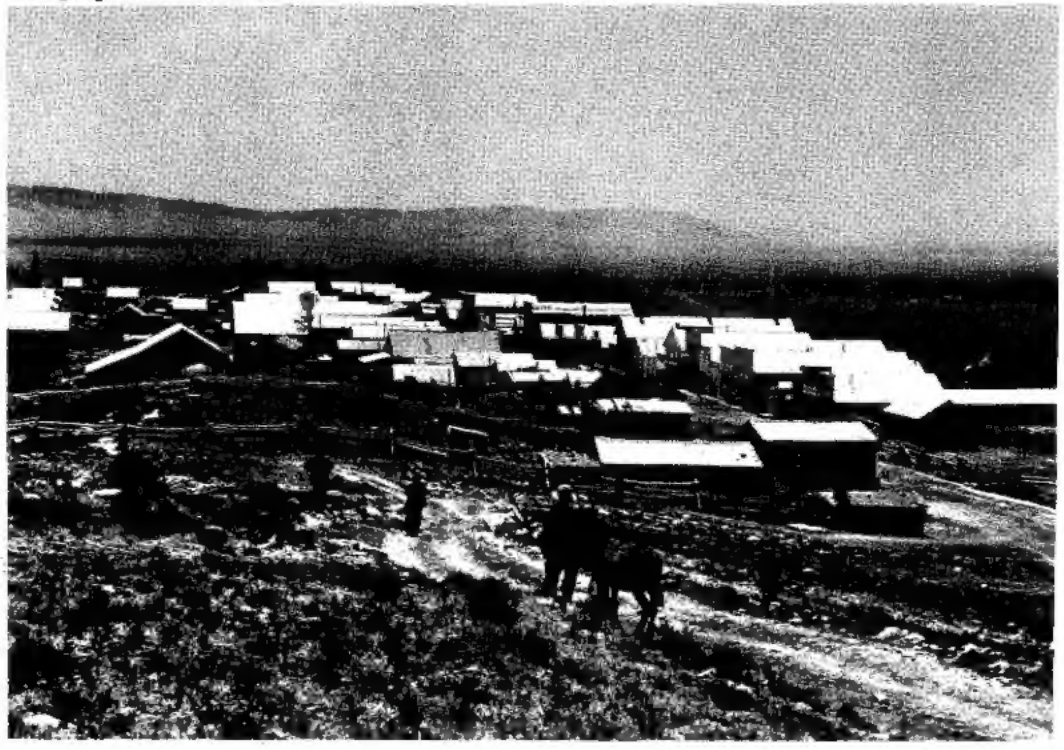

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Courtesy John Devine

ing poker. Ben was an inveterate gambler. Couldn't pass up a game. Left almost everything he ever made on the poker table, or on the green felt. Too bad. He knew mining. Good man, Rich.

"A funny thing. I remember asking Ben about his name, once, but I've forgotten if he used a period after the middle initial or not. I don't have total recall, anymore. Seems like when he was being christened, the minister asked Ben's dad for his name.

"'Ben F.'

"'Ah! Benjamin Franklin?' the minister asked.

"'No, dammit, Ben F.'

"But that's beside the point. Ben would have been about twenty, then, or thereabouts. Perhaps younger. Believe he was born about '60. He joint-ventured with Robinson on a couple propositions, but he wasn't a partner when George B. found the goodie. Ben took on this job because he was sweet on a little girl. She turned him down, though. Ben was on shift the day George got riddled."

On the gambling score, a nephew, William H. Jurney, discounts some of Rich's gambling exploits.

"Sure, he gambled some, all right, but he generally had money. And, after all, Aunt Vic used to help him spend his money. One reason for the stories about Uncle Ben's gambling is the fact that he used to deal at one of the houses. That's the way he earned his grubstake money."

Robinson hired a whole crew. He spotted guards outside as well as inside the mine. A heavy iron door was placed at the portal and guards situated themselves in a crosscut only a short way down the tunnel.

"Anyone coming through that iron door without giving the prearranged signal was a dead duck," Rich told Devine. "All the guard had to do was pull the trigger. He couldn't miss."

In trying to check this story from other sources I learned that there is a possibility that the tunnel hadn't been started, for the original mining was done through a shaft. The iron door may have been on the shafthouse. But historians will never completely reconstruct the history around the town of Robinson for it lies buried under the tailings pond from the famous Climax molybdenum deposit.

As an incentive, Robinson offered a nice reward for any guard who shot an intruder, at the same time warning the guards inside the tunnel that they would lose their jobs if someone entered the portal without giving the signal, and was *not* shot.

"'And he meant it, too. That's the sort of fellow Robinson was.'"

Robinson forgot one day. An excited miner brought him word that the opposition was getting ready to make its play. Rushing to the mine to discuss the situation with his manager, he neglected to give the signal. As he burst through the iron door, the guard couldn't distinguish him in the quick flood of strong sunlight. He pulled the trigger. Robinson dropped in his tracks, mortally wounded.

The guard felt bad, of course, but he had no way of knowing.

"'What could he do?' Rich said. 'He had instructions to shoot. He did. If he hadn't pulled the trigger, ol' George would have fired him right on the spot, pronto.'"

Robinson lived a few minutes, long enough to give one last order. He gave his mine manager instructions to pay the reward to the guard who had shot him down. Robinson was a man of his word.

ONCE DURING a discussion with John Devine he remarked that he would rather have "one brush of luck than all the science in the world." Naturally he referred to "good" luck. Most people have enough of the other kind.

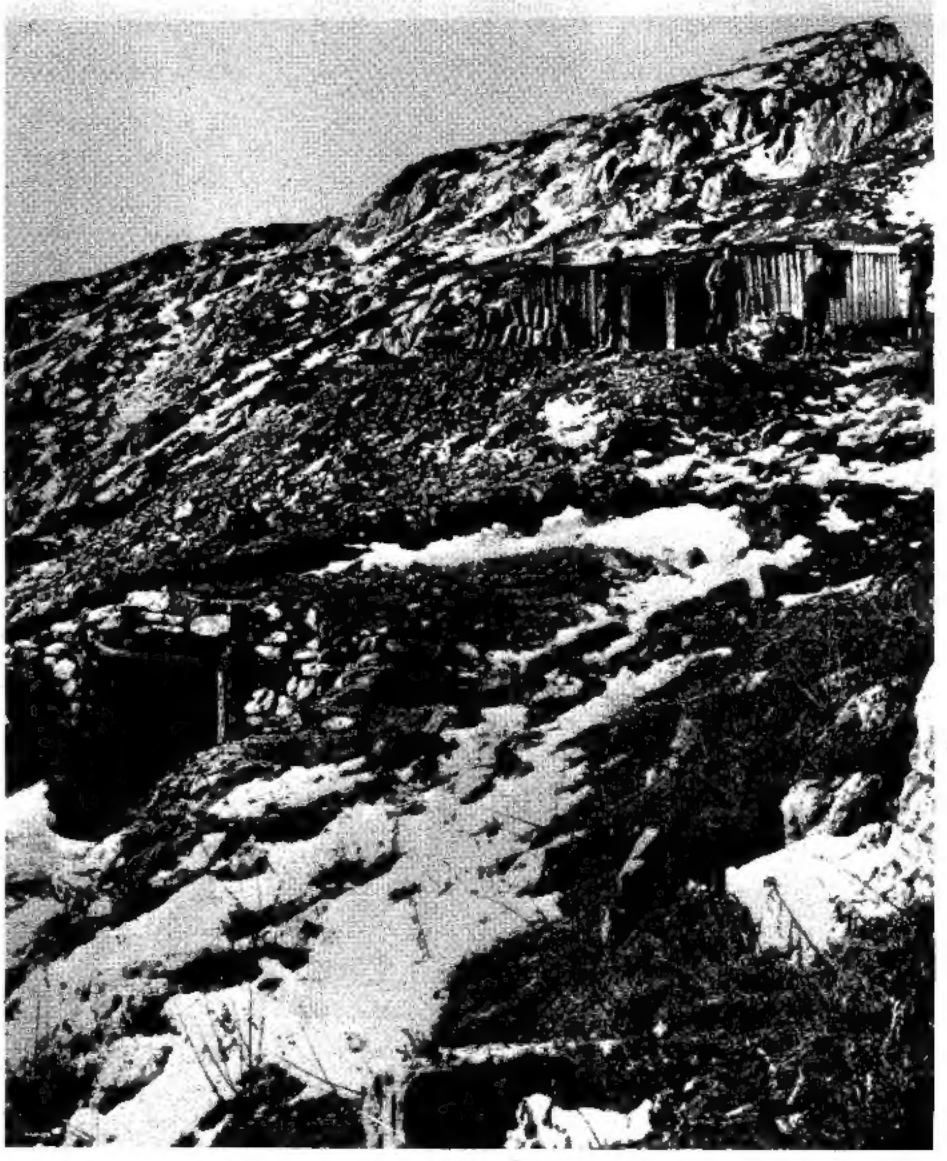
One story John uses as an illustration concerns John F. Campion, who became a multimillionaire largely due to his mining ventures. Yet with all his success, he is barely mentioned in histories of Colorado. His big break came with the Little Jonny (often called Little Johnnie) Mine on Breece Hill, near Leadville.

Samuel F. Emmons *et al* have classically described the geology and ore deposits of the Leadville district. The Little Jonny shaft was down 120 feet in 1883, producing lead-silver ore in 1884, while in 1891 John Campion found gold ore on the Little Jonny claim. Gold made Campion.

While Emmons and his co-workers were only interested in fact finding, a legend,

Ben F. Rich, seated in the picture at left, was on duty at the time George Robinson was shot. Seen with Ben are his wife, Victoria, and their son, Robert. An early-day picture of the Champaign Mine in Park County, Colorado, is seen below.

Denver Public Library Western Collection



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nevertheless, sprang up concerning one of the group. A young geologist, intent on studying the rock types outcropping on Breece Hill, found himself confronted by a would-be miner, who asked the geologist for a good location to prospect. Unhappy at being disturbed, the geologist curtly replied, "Under that tree over there," pointing to a lone tree nearby. After a few minutes' work with a shovel the miner struck ore on what became the Little Jonny.

That story has a fictitious ring although stranger strikes have been made. Devine's story comes in the era when Campion mined high-grade gold. Like most men who suddenly become wealthy, Campion just as suddenly considered himself an expert. You can talk all you want about good and bad luck, but you can't argue with success. Denouncing a particular discovery as resulting from sheer luck only amounts to "sour grapes."

Campion had a manager named George Becker, who also had some theories about mining and finding ore. For months Becker asked permision to drive into adjacent ground which he had reason to believe might be favorable. He couldn't get his boss to approve the expenditures.

Becker had a gambling spirit, however. At least he didn't mind gambling with Campion's money. Realizing that if he drifted into the forbidden ground and found nothing, his job would be "up for grabs," Becker still liked the odds and had supreme confidence in his judgment. He bided his time. When Campion decided to spend a lengthy vacation in Florida, he had his chance.

Drifting over into the virgin ground, Becker ran into the best ore body in the history of the mine. It added millions to the Campion coffers. Old-timers shook their heads. Old Camp just couldn't miss.

Naturally, Campion didn't relish the "lucky" stigma tattooed on all his money. He would rather have the talk breezed around about his genius ability. He hummed and hawed, stuttered and sputtered, and "talked Chinese." It came out that he had had tremendous faith in the new area all the time. It was just that he wanted to be around to supervise the work. And so on, and so on.

Don't get the idea, though, that Campion didn't reward his manager for his good piece of work. Becker got a new suit and a day off.

MEN FROM all walks of life have been lured into the mining game, even ordained ministers. One minister, Edward J. Wilcox, contracted "mining fever" at an early age and became a self-made mining man.

By the late '70s, Colorado had passed through its several colorful eras of Indians, the adventurers and explorers, the fur trappers, the mountain men, and the placer-gold miners. Silver mining followed. For many decades silver was the magic word. The lure of the white metal was not as strong as the yellow, but silver did attract people from all over the world.

Born in Canada, Wilcox came to Colorado because of these glowing accounts. He mined for six years and then went into the ministry, spending six years as a Methodist pastor in the towns of Pueblo and Longmont.

When he left the ministry in 1892, his son, Edward B. "Barkley" Wilcox, who lives in Denver, asked him why he returned to mining.

"It is better for me to build churches than to serve just one as pastor," Wilcox told his son.

Depending on whether he had long-range or short-range plans, the minister made his second run at silver at either the best or worst time in its up-and-down history. The Panic of 1893 broke the white-metal miners. Properties lay idle throughout the state. Only a few men weathered the economic storm as companies dissolved right and left.

By 1905, Wilcox owned and operated mining properties in the Argentine mining district, near the mining camp of Waldorf, which for a time had the highest post office in the United States. He served as president and general manager of the Waldorf Mining Company. Team-drawn wagons from Georgeton and Silver Plume rolled along the rutted mountain roads day and night, hauling supplies up, ore down.

Freighting by wagon proved costly and time consuming. Wilcox realized that by shipping a greater volume of ore and cutting his per-ton costs, he could mine lower grade materials, thus increasing his reserves.

That meant transportation had to be speeded up. But you can't speed up horses. Wilcox decided he needed a railroad. He went into action.

On August 1, 1905, ground-breaking ceremonies took place at Silver Plume. Exactly one year later the Argentine Central Railway became a reality. Iron horses replaced draft horses. Barkley writes that the line operated with one construction Shay engine and six regulars. The narrow-gauge line covered approximately sixteen miles between Silver Plume and Waldorf, including a spur to the Vidler tunnel and another to the top of McClellan Mountain.

Passenger service was inaugurated during the tourist season. The Argentine Central tied into the Colorado and Southern tracks at Silver Plume. Wilcox sat down with Parker, vice-president of the C & S line, to work out the tourist schedule. They started with Monday and ended with Sunday.

"This, Wilcox, is your biggest money-making day," Parker said.

"I am not going to run the road on Sundays," Wilcox replied.

"You're crazy!"

Alma, Colorado

Denver Public Library Western Collection

Courtesy Edward B. Wilcox

Rev. Edward J. Wilcox had an unusual mining career. This cartoon depicts his policy of investing his profits in churches.

"Maybe so, but my Partner, the Lord, has helped me and I will stand by Him."

Despite pressure from Parker, Wilcox remained adamant on his no-traffic-on-Sunday stand. Parker predicted he would lose money. By the end of six months he thought otherwise.

Meeting Wilcox on 16th Street in Denver one day, Parker slapped him on the back. "Wilcox, you're the slickest man I ever met."

Parker had learned that the idea of a mining man with a railroad who would not operate on Sundays had become "big copy." The story was printed all over the country. The result of the unpaid-for publicity prompted thousands of travelers to ride the road to the clouds for the breathtaking view from McClellan Mountain. His tourist-passenger service paid for the upkeep of the railroad while he owned it.

It appeared that the Waldorf Mining Company would prosper. When Barkley Wilcox returned from overseas in 1945, he lived for awhile in Georgetown, where he made an attempt to learn more of his father's operations. In the Board of Trade records of Silver Plume, he learned that during the winter of 1905-1906 his father took out $1,300,000 worth of ore from the old Belmont lode.

Frank C. Hollenback in his *The Argentine Central* states that while in England in 1907 Wilcox turned down an offer of $3,000,000 for his mining properties and railroad. About the time he returned home, the Silver Panic of 1907 dealt him a staggering blow, and by 1908 the operation had incurred debts in excess of $700,000.

The venture lasted four years. In 1909 the railroad sold for $44,000, its accrued loss amounting to over $250,000. So the final statistics on Edward J. Wilcox are quite sad, from a financial standpoint. Unlike many others who suffered similar tragedies in the Panic of 1907, he began immediately to take care of his debts.

"All obligations and debts were paid off by 1913 or 1914," Barkley recalls.

No one would have blamed Wilcox if he had quit mining and returned to preaching. But after taking care of all obligations in his railroad-mining venture, he went to Sonora, Mexico, where he initiated work on the Artemesia Mine. Bandits and revolutionaries did not bother him. His downfall in Mexico came because of the attitude and policy of the Mexican Government toward the Yaqui Indians. Since Mexican miners were not available, Wilcox had to hire Indian labor. Whenever he employed Yaquis, the Federal troops would arrest them on pay day, march them into the hills, and they were never heard of again. He had to close down. It was "Strike Three!" and Wilcox was out.

So again the mystery and vicissitudes of mining persist. Wilcox was a nice fellow, completely honest, reliable and competent. He always used good mining procedures, techniques and logic, yet always lost. And strangely enough, he always came back for more.

Mining gets in the blood. Once you contract the fever, you're an addict for life. The mining game seldoms loses a convert.

SCALAWAGS OF all sorts floated around the early camps: promoters, high-graders, salters, and claim jumpers. Some were out-and-out crooks; some suffered from temporary insanity. Men did not always act rationally with the rash of gold and silver strikes being made all around them.

The fact that a penniless prospector could become a millionaire miner overnight kept men keyed to a high pitch.

Back in the early '80s, claim jumpers from Leadville began operating on the east side of the Mosquito Range in South Park. A reporter for the *Leadville Journal* in 1887 tells how one old-timer (name withheld) outwitted two hoodlums.

Prospecting along South Mosquito Gulch, the old-timer came across two men working on a prospect, who apparently "saw him coming." Their discovery shaft exhibited a nice showing of galena. The old-timer asked the men if they would sell their claim. After a couple of discussions the miners reluctantly agreed to sell for $250 cash. The old-timer had no interest in mining and promptly put the property up for sale. A couple of days later he took a prospective buyer out to show him the property. He found the prospectors who had sold him the claim still working on it, sinking another discovery pit. He asked the two men what they were doing.

One of the prospectors replied, "You think we sold you a ten-foot hole, but we didn't. It was only nine feet and three inches deep. You can see, therefore, that we have the right to sink anywhere on the public domain, provided it is not too near a ten-foot prospect hole."

Below left, Dr. Robert G. Risk examines an ore car on the dump near the Dauntless Tunnel of the Hilltop Mine. Sheep Mountain can be seen left of center in the distance. The old Hilltop shaft (below right) is high on the skyline in Four Mile Amphitheater. It was at this operation that two frozen miners were treated as human bowling balls.

Photos Courtesy Author

Courtesy Robert A. ...

Ed Snell pauses beside a rundown cabin in the ghost town of Quartzville with Mount Lincoln in the distance. Russia Mine is on the shoulder to the right of the summit.

Since the old-timer did not have the necessary ten-foot discovery pit, the claim was invalid and he couldn't promote his sale. He knew that the two scoundrels could file a location notice just as soon as their new pit was down ten feet, and he would be minus both the claim and his $250.

He went to Alma and purchased two new cloth tapes, identical in every respect. He carefully spliced one tape, somewhere between 1 and 10, and neatly sewed the ends together. Then he rounded up several responsible and trustworthy citizens of Alma and took them out to the disputed claim, at a time when the two miners weren't around. He asked the group to measure the depth of the discovery shaft in question, slipping them the cut tape. They all agreed the hole in question was ten feet, three inches deep. While the group helped the citizen at the bottom of the hole out, the old-timer dexterously exchanged the tapes, putting the spliced one in his pocket, and he charged his friends to keep the other tape in their possession as he intended to bring suit against the two men who had duped him.

This he did. While the case was in progress, he hired a couple of men to sink the discovery pit another foot. With so many reliable witnesses on his side, the old-timer easily won the suit. Chagrined, the losers rushed from the courtroom and hurried to the claim to remeasure the pit with their own tape. It was ten feet, three inches.

Their plans had gone awry. Since the validity of the claim had been established in favor of the old-timer, the second shaft along the vein also belonged to him, as it lay within the boundaries of the claim. This second shaft showed the continuation of the vein found in the first shaft. The property was now properly "dressed up" for a sale, the old-timer receiving $18,000, a nice sum in those days, and certainly a good return on his original investment.

GHOST STORIES have always been great favorites around mining camps, largely because the miner is inveterately a superstitious fellow. Ghosts stalked them along the mountain trails, mocked them inside the dark underground workings, haunted them in their snowbound cabins. Back in the early days a ghost would hex a mine quicker than running out of high-grade ore would. Maybe that was the reason why Jim Redman didn't warn his teenage nephew, Bob Risk, about the "ghost of the Russia Mine."

Jim Redman was a well-known promoter and mine manager of South Park as was his dad before him. Billy Redman, the famous blind miner, lost his eyesight in the New York Mine. He had drilled a round, loaded it, and gone out to eat lunch. Failing to count his shots, he returned to the breast to muck out his round, and a delayed shot caught him full in the face. Even after he lost his eyesight, Billy returned to Marshall, Missouri, and married a beautiful girl, his childhood sweetheart, and operated many properties in Park County.

Dr. Robert G. Risk, active in mining in Colorado for many years, recalls that each time his Uncle Jim went by the New York tunnel he never failed to walk to the breast where he would utter "the most beautiful prayer I've ever heard."

Redman wrote his first book at nineteen. For awhile he had been a private secretary to dignitaries of the Burlington Railroad, but he couldn't take that inactive life. He read continuously, particularly Shakespeare. Occasionally while prospecting on Loveland or Democrat Mountains, or Mount Bross, Redman might suddenly turn about and in a thunderous voice run through an entire soliloquy, as if in a trance. Sheepherders within earshot would listen spellbound.

In the late '20s and '30s, Redman controlled the Russia Mine, one of the three largest producers of the Alma district. High on Mount Lincoln, the Russia for many years was the highest actively-worked mine in the United States, at an elevation exceeding 13,800 feet.

Redman waited for the spring snows to clear so he could put a crew at the mine. He told Bob to ride up to check on the snow and the condition of the buildings and workings, arranging for seventeen-year-old Harry Treweek to accompany him.

Bob and Harry ate an early breakfast at Mrs. Treweek's boarding house, saddled their horses, skirted the backside of Mount Bross to the deserted camp of Quartzville, then zigzagged up the steep trail on Mount Lincoln to the mine. Everything seemed in good shape but they couldn't find any carbide. Bob had brought some candles along for just such an emergency but, when it came to going underground, Harry seemed reluctant. He thought of several excuses for staying outside. Bob finally persuaded him. For a couple of hundred feet from the portal the boys had to crawl over ice before they could "walk track." Huge blue-and-white ice crystals sparkled from the walls. Harry kept hanging back.

About a thousand feet from the portal, the boys dropped down into the main stope. Bob flashed his light at one end of the stope known as the Staircase, a faulted area composed of a series of broken-rock steps and inclined ladderways leading to the upper workings. Harry bolted, dropped his candle, and fled hysterically in the darkness. Bob tried to catch him but by the time he had reached the portal, Harry had mounted and was plunging headlong down the treacherous talus slope, completely disregarding the switchbacking trail. Young Risk followed, "scared half to death." One bad step could have meant death.

Redman was away when the boys reached Alma, and Harry refused to say why he had panicked. Risk got the story that night from Jim Sturman, the famous story teller of South Park, at Mrs. Treweek's boarding house, as the old-timers swapped yarns after supper.

FIVE MEN stood on the dump of the Russia mine, eating lunch. Jim Redman and Jim Sturman had three officials of the U. S. Smelting & Refining Company in tow, on an inspection tour of the mine.

Suddenly one of the men blurted out,

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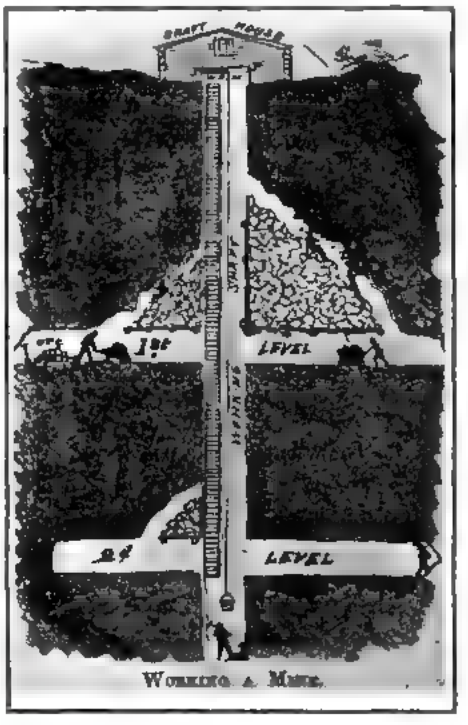

WORKING A MINE.

Denver Public Library Western Collection

An unknown miner works a windlass over a shaft in Colorado's Front Range.

"Who the devil is that?"

They all stared at an old-timer coming straight up the side of Mt. Lincoln. The men stopped eating. With disbelief they watched the approaching figure, for that part of the mountain is treacherously steep, full of slide rock. He was a "great bearded giant," they said, and he walked with the ease and grace of a mountain goat.

"He was a giant of a man," Jim Sturman said. "He made most men look like a midget. Lordy, wasn't he big, though?"

The giant came on. He never once stopped for a breather, and he appeared to be breathing normally as he came abreast of the men on the dump—if he breathed at all, that is. He stared straight ahead, arms moving briskly like a Prussian soldier.

Someone quietly said, "Hello, there!" but the fellow paid no notice, and went between the men, at easy spitting distance.

Jim Sturman muttered, "Don't that beat all!"

The bearded giant went straight to the portal, took a candle from his coat pocket, lit it, and, stooping, went underground, disappearing from sight. The men on the dump were speechless. Finally Redman snatched a candle and ran for the portal. Inside, ahead of him, he couldn't hear any sounds. Jim hollered. No answer. Only his own voice echoed along the tunnel, mocking him. Quickly he raced along the tunnel to the big stope, where already the stranger began ascending the staircase, his flickering candle throwing a grotesque shadow against the back and ribs. He moved easily, using no hands on the inclined ladders. Again the stranger went out of sight; again Redman followed. But the giant dissolved into the dolomite walls.

Redman rejoined the group outside. They laughed, kidding each other about seeing spooks. They collected some dump samples, all the while keeping an eye on the portal. It was the only way in or out. The stranger had gone in; he didn't come out. Jim suggested they all go underground and find out what the stranger was up to. Maybe he was high-grading.

They searched all the old stopes, hiked along all the drifts, crosscuts and laterals, entered all the accessible workings, flashed their lights into every crevice, but found no trace of anyone. One or two swore they heard a moaning sound, like someone praying. But it could have been the wind, they said, sucking along the workings. Outside they pondered the mystery and waited until nearly dark before they gave up and came off the mountain.

Sturman, known far and wide for tall tales, told the incident that night at the boarding house, and the story spread from there. Backed up by four reliable witnesses, the tale grew into the "Ghost of the Russia Mine" and the townspeople seemed reluctant to let it die a natural death.

For a year or so, old-timers fanned the flames, and kicked the story about. One day a prospector would glimpse a stranger on the flank of North Star Mountain. Then another would see a mysterious fellow around Wheeler Lake. Sometimes he walked easily; other times he raced like the wind. Up or down, it made no difference. Most of the time they spotted him on the stalwart trio of mountains —Lincoln, Bross and Cameron—but always far away. They could see his tracks in the snow, going or coming from the portal of the Russia.

Who he was didn't worry them so much as where he was. For a period of a year or so Redman couldn't get any miners from Alma or Fairplay to work at the Russia. Miners from Leadville might stay a day or two but once they heard the story they went down the hill. He could get men to work topside, but they didn't go into the tunnel. They could take the deep snows and the driving winds, but he couldn't get them underground—not in a mine inhabited by a great bearded ghost.

HUNGRY MEN are not particular about their bill of fare. An old prospector would eat anything that moved. Unhesitatingly, he would drink the blood of any creature that he could capture or kill. As a last resort he would eat his own burro, his companion of the trail.

But when Harry Johnson told me the story of Nicotine Joe, he didn't believe it was a case of starvation. Johnson worked many mines in the San Juan region and at the time of the story was a partner of Otto Beselack in the San Bernardo Mine at Matterhorn, just south of Old Ophir. Beselack promoted dozens of mines but never went underground.

Harry got caught in an unusually heavy snowstorm one early spring day and experienced an exhausting afternoon snowshoeing off the mountain. About two miles from home he approached the cabin of Nicotine Joe. It was dusk, or it would have been dusk without the snow. The night air was cold and raw, the snow wet and sticky. Tired and hungry, Johnson wanted to get rid of his heavy pack. A friendly curl of smoke above the cabin invited him in, although normally he wouldn't have stopped.

Old Nicotine was a half-crazed prospector with a wild look in his eye. Spare, angular, dirty, irascible, suspicious of everyone, he generally kept to himself, living like a hermit, going to town only when he needed flour and beans. Joe could talk by the hour, but his talk amounted to a lot of gibberish. Old-timers avoided him whenever possible.

Harry barged into the cabin and asked Joe if he could leave his packsack overnight. Joe agreed. Inside, the cabin smelled bad, but it was warm and Harry decided to rest a bit and have a cup of coffee. He poured a steaming cupful. The coffee went down good, despite the evil smell and Joe's wild talk. Joe had his hands in a bowl of flour, mixing biscuits. He invited Johnson to stay for supper.

"Knowing Old Nicotine Joe, I though I'd better check the pot before accepting," Harry said.

When Johnson pulled the lid off the big, black iron kettle on the wood range, he stared in amazement at a burro shank, hair, hoof, shoe, dirt, and all.

"Well, you don't expect me to gnaw on a damn old burro shank, do you?" Harry asked.

Nicotine Joe squared around belligerently.

"Well, we ain't gonna eat it, ya durn fool. That's the season'n fur the stew, ya idjut."

But Harry Johnson had had enough. He left.

GOLD MINES which produced visible gold were seldom shorthanded. The word got around. A manager always had a waiting list. Free gold brings out the worst in a man. The yellow temptation, or yellow fever, as some called it, was infectious. High-grading, like rum running, could be an insidious business. Sticky-fingered miners thought of high-grading as a fringe benefit; greedy mine owners thought of it as stealing.

Back then, the no-questions-asked, open-buying policy of the mints aided the gold thief. Other than determining the weight and fineness, the sale of gold to the mint was a cut-and-dried proposition. Illicit gold smugglers thrived. Black marketeers found gold running a lucrative business.

In mines like the Little Jonny and the adjoining Golden Eagle workings, high-grading proved disastrous and almost forced certain mines to suspend operations. The Little Jonny eventually became part of the Ibex Mine which had over fifty miles of underground workings. Hiring "watchdogs" to check the men in

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Mama never thought of it as anything but a head covering—well, it was more than that to Papa and his mules!

PAPA'S STRAW HAT

By FRED GIPSON

Illustrated by Al M. Napoletano

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Dallas, Texas

FOR A HARDWORKING dryland Texas farmer, Papa took unusual pride in his personal appearance. He used to tell me, "Now, Son, you may not can afford fine clothes, but anybody can take care of what clothes he's got and keep them clean and mended."

And Papa practiced what he preached. I can remember that even his work clothes, no matter how worn out and frazzled they might become, somehow never appeared quite as disreputable as the clothes of other men who did heavy outdoor work.

This was especially true of his hats. For dress or work, Papa always wore the same kind of hat. It was what I'd call a "Texas" hat, a black John B. Stetson of fine quality felt, with a wide brim and a tall crown.

Unlike most men in our part of the country, Papa never went in for fancy creases and dents in his hat crown. He wore his full and tall, hoping, I always suspected, that the high-standing crown would add a bit to his slight stature.

Papa always kept two hats. One was called his "Sunday" hat and the other his "everyday" hat; and when his everyday hat wore out, he replaced it with his Sunday hat and replaced that with a new one.

The Sunday hat, which he wore only for town-going, Fourth of July barbecues, and occasional church attendances, resided most of the time in the huge cardboard box it had come in. The box resided on a high shelf. And we kids knew to respect that hatbox. Without ever exactly being told, we sensed that to drag down that box and finger Papa's hat with our grimy hands was a mighty good way to get our tailends busted.

Even Papa's everyday hat was never tossed carelessly onto the floor or into a chair where it might get sat upon and crushed. There was a special nail driven into the wall behind the hall door and always, the moment Papa came in from work, he went straight to that nail and hung up his hat.

Mama was as respectful and careful of Papa's hats as he was, proud, I'm sure, of Papa's manly appearance when he donned his tall-crowned Sunday hat and Sunday clothes. But, for most of her married life, she was terribly concerned about his everyday hat. During the summers, ours is an extremely hot country, and somewhere Mama had come by the dubious information that a man wearing a felt hat in the hot summertime put himself in great danger of becoming bald.

I can understand Mama's concern. Her brother, my Uncle George, had become bald as a watermelon by the time he reached thirty. And there was Papa, so handsome with his dark eyes, black mustache, and a head of hair as black and shiny as a crow's wing. It would have been nothing short of catastrophe for him to have sweated loose that hair under a hot felt hat.

During the summers, we kids shaded our heads from the fierce glare of the sun with broad-brimmed, high-peaked, loosely woven straw hats imported from Mexico, and that was the sort of hat Mama wanted Papa to wear. But getting him into such a hat—through which the hair-preserving breezes could blow—was about like trying to slip the first bits between the teeth of the wild mules Papa broke to harness. It took time and some doing.

Mama kept at it for years; but every time she brought up the subject, Papa would declare himself.

"Why," he'd say, "I'd be ashamed to let my mules catch me in a hat like that."

"Fiddlesticks!" Mama would exclaim. "What does a mule care about what sort of hat you wear?"

And Papa would say, "Well, mules are mighty sensitive about a lot of things. Anyhow, I wouldn't be caught out on a dark night wearing one of them strawstacks."

Then Mama would try to frighten him with the possibility of his becoming bald, quoting Martha Berry who was convinced that her man Jim had lost his hair because of wearing a hot felt hat. But that would only make Papa snort with derision.

"What made Jim Berry's hair loosen and shed wasn't his hat. It was the hot blast from his woman's tongue, going night and day."

MAMA ARGUED and pled and threatened till her patience finally wore out, then took decisive action. She caught a wagon ride into town with one of the neighbors and bought Papa a straw hat.

It was a hard, dry year, when money was scarce and the chances for a crop looked mighty slim. It was also a year when Papa's everyday hat had reached the stage where he'd soon have to replace it. And Mama's reasoning on the matter, I'm sure, was that if she'd al-

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Rodeo's favorite girls and favorite horses, rodeo's best and toughest men . . .

I KNEW THEM ALL

By MILT HINKLE

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From left to right: Marie Gibson, Velda Tindel, Rene Hafley Shelton, Louise Hardwick, unidentified, Vivian White, Vaughn Kreig, Mabel Baker, and Tad Lucas, described by Milt Hinkle as "the greatest of them all." Marie Gibson (extreme left) lost her life in the death-defying pastime of bronc riding.

THOUGH I am over eighty, I have some very vivid and wonderfully exciting memories of the days I spent as a cowboy. There were trials and tribulations, happiness and sorrow, prosperity and near poverty, but I wouldn't trade those experiences and memories of them for anything.

Bill Sawyer is another old-time contestant who is retired, and like me, lives at Kissimmee, Florida, which is known as the "Cowboy Capital of the World." Bill and I love to discuss the various cowboys and cowgirls, horses and bulls that it has been our privilege to know throughout the years.

Ask any of the old-timers about Blue Jay and I'll wager they will tell you that he was one of the roughest and toughest bucking horses in his or any other time. Back in 1914-'15-'16 and '17, the name, Blue Jay, would send a tingling up and down our spines! No one knew any better than Bill Sawyer and I what a great bronc he was! Most of the cowboys would bet their dough that they could ride anything with hair on it; we were no exception and more often than not our bets paid off. However this was not the case when we, or anyone else for that matter, tried old Blue Jay.

Little did the town of Anson, Texas, and a rancher named E. A. Scott realize both would become equally famous because of this great bucking horse. The bronc was taken overland to all the Texas picnics and wherever else a contest was held—but never did a cowboy ride him successfully until March of 1917.

The Fort Worth Stock Show was producing a rodeo at the old Coliseum Building on the north side of town near the stockyards. This was the first year the rodeo was held at Fort Worth, although the 101 Ranch held a show there and Homer Wilson and Lucille Mulhall had produced the first Wild West Show at that location. These two events were in 1915 and 1916.

Bill Sawyer and I participated in all three of the shows. The greatest of all rodeo announcers, Fog Horn Clancy, was also a very important part of these shows.

IT WAS a very sad day for Blue Jay and his owner at the Fort Worth Stock Show. This is how it came about. Four cowboys teamed up and figured a way to ride Blue Jay. One was an extremely powerful man, a real cowboy, about five-feet ten in height and weighing 210 pounds. It was a known fact that he could put the average stock saddle between his legs and "bust" the saddle tree. He was also a man of very powerful shoulders and fists (of which everyone was well aware). In other words, as we say in cowboy language, "He was a mighty man!"

The second was the type who feared neither man nor beast regardless of reputation, a Champion Bucking Horse Rider.

The third was a mighty man in his own right. A regular fashion plate, he was dubbed the best dressed cowboy. However, without his solid gold- and silver-plated, pearl-handled .45 Colt (his constant companion) he would have felt very undressed indeed. He also was one of the best all-time saddle bucking horse riders.

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Another group of rodeo favorites. From left: Rene Hafley Shelton; Fox Hastings, the first lady bulldogger; Rose Smith, Ruth Roach, Mabel Strickland, Prairie Rose Henderson, Dorothy Morrell Robbins.

Kansas City, Missouri Public Library

Tommy Grimes—Bob Crosby—Prosser Martin—Jake McClure—Dick Shelton—Dick Truitt
These smiling cowboys won fame at Chicago Rodeo.

The fourth was widely known as being just "a little on the tough side."

One of the boys had a wide-forked freak saddle made by sawing off part of the swell fork. The rigging of the saddle was set so that the saddle would sit far forward on the horse's neck. Then when the saddle was cinched, fastening it down with the strong girth with an extra long latigo strap, he would take a couple of extra wraps in the saddle rings. (He always greased the latigo a little.) A double-rigged saddle it was, with the front and back cinch strapped together. This was the type of saddle used on Blue Jay to "conquer the unconquered!"

Great sums of money changed hands between the cowboys and spectators as the time approached for the ride. When time came to saddle Blue Jay the sack blindfold was put over his head, the "ear-down" man took hold of his ears, and the appointed rider stepped up to watch two of his buddies saddle the horse. They pulled the saddle far forward on Blue Jay's neck, and Mr. Scott approached the horse to pull the saddle back on the horse's back where, in reality, it belonged.

One of the boys then grabbed Scott, pushing him back and informing him to get out of the way and they would do the saddling in any way they saw fit. He minced no words and told Scott in no uncertain terms that if he or any of his friends chose to interfere, the four cowboys were ready to do battle. People who witnessed this might have seen one of the roughest and bloodiest battles in the history of cowboys had not Mr. Scott deemed it wise to let the riders have their way. The saddling went on as scheduled.

The saddle was set again 'way forward on the horse's neck. The latigo strap was pulled over his shoulder, so tight that the front end of Blue Jay's body was lifted off the ground. The cowboy then pulled the back cinch tight and the rider stepped up in the saddle, the ear-down man holding fast to the horse's ears and biting them hard.

Everyone fell back to give Ol' Blue room to do his worst, and the blindfold was jerked from his head. Blue must have known he was whipped for he just stood there in one spot until he was rapped across the hips with some chaps. Blue Jay made one last final effort to dismount the cowboy but the cinch was too tight. Here was the famous Blue Jay who had earned the reputation of being wild, mean and unbeatable, but who was now conquered. His heart was broken and he never was the same again.

Blue Jay was ridden twice more at that Fort Worth rodeo. These rides were made by Booger Red, Jr. and Leonard Stroud, but Blue had not had a fair deal. Fog Horn Clancy, the announcer, did not like the manner in which the horse was being treated but having been hired in the capacity of rodeo announcer only, Fog had no voice in the matter.

No, this was not the same horse—the spirited one which dumped me at Cleburne, Texas, the year before. I lucked out and rode Blue Jay for sixty-eight hard jumps or bucks. Not eight or ten seconds but I would say a full twelve seconds. That length of time on the hurricane deck of a good bronc seems like a lifetime to the individual who happens to be mounted on the animal. Bill Sawyer was one of the hardest cowboys to buck off a bronc but Ol' Blue had got the job done.

Claire Belcher Thompson also tried her hand at bulldogging. She is seen here with (standing from left), Mabel Baker, Minnie Adams, Mildred Douglas Hinkle, Alma Hammer, Claire, Loretta Butler. In the front row the Baker girls are first and third from the left with Louise Hardwick on the right. The girl second from the left is unidentified.

Courtesy Author

Courtesy Jack and Vera DeVidts

The famed bucking horse, Blue Jay, is seen at left. Champion Trick Rider Leonard Stroud (above) was another who rode Blue Jay when the great horse was at the peak of its career.

Sawyer and I made a "stab" at most of the bucking horses in the old days; some we rode and some we didn't. We took seats on a lot of bucking horses in the Northern Rodeo Circuit. We watched them buck and studied them from every angle so that in case we drew their numbers out of the hat, we would know just about how to ride them.

Mr. Scott took Blue Jay back home and turned him in with the saddle horses and work horses. He later proved to be one of the best cow horses in the State of Texas. I might add that reins used for riding bucking horses in those days were unlike those used by the present-day cowboys. Blue Jay's rider used two split reins about one and one-quarter inches wide, with a rein on each side of the horse's neck. Today's cowboys just use one rope rein.

FLAXIE was a great southern bucking horse. He was owned by my good friend, Texas Bud Snell. Texas Bud had what was called a "Bronc Show." Flaxie was a great drawing card and a mighty hard horse to ride. With the help of one of the greatest of all-time bucking horse riders, John Henry, and a Negro called "Wild Horse Charlie" (also a great rider and one of the best ear-down men), I lucked out on Flaxie three times out of five. This was the winter of 1912.

Another very great southern bucking horse was Cockle Burr Dunn whose name was later changed to Done Gone. Dunn was an outlaw horse from the Bell Ranch Remuda in New Mexico before Mrs. Clay Keen bought him and started him on the rodeo circuit. He was made famous by Fog Horn Clancy, then publicity man for Tex Austin at Magdalena, New Mexico, in 1917. Fog Horn got Angelo Hughes to ride Done Gone for a hat collection for the Red Cross and raised well over $2,000. Hughes, I believe, could have ridden the horse but Fog Horn and Hughes went into a little conference before he mounted Done Gone. The result was that Hughes bucked off about the fifth or sixth jump.

At Tucumcari, New Mexico, the following week I lucked out and rode Done Gone. When I saw I had him rode I stepped off but the public thought I had bucked off. Eddie McCarty was there and bought Done Gone at that time. Two years later McCarty rode him at Cheyenne, winning the Cheyenne Frontier Days Championship. This was a contest he had tried to win for a long time. Done Gone won first prize as Cheyenne's greatest bucking horse of the year.

Another famous bucking horse was Crazy Snake. This horse at one time pulled a Singer Sewing Machine wagon at Wichita Falls, Texas, and I know for a fact that Crazy Snake was never rode to contest rules. He was owned by Lackman and Lewis' Wild West Show. I bought him along with other well known bucking horses, Montana Red, Big Steve and Preacher Dunn. All of these horses rated along with the best and if they were still alive would sell easily and individually for $2,500. Honest Bill's Wild West Circus bought them, but Crazy Snake wound up in a soap factory at Ada, Oklahoma.

Booger Red had a wonderful little bucking horse called Pay Day. Texas Kidd had one called Little Boy. All of these horses were very difficult to ride. Idaho Bill Barney Pearson owned a string of buckers that were all good. One in particular, called Old Paint, could out-buck any horse of his day. I have been on and off all these horses.

It was at Sioux City, Iowa, in a park, where Charlie and Frank Irwin were showing with the Irwin Brothers' Wild West Show that I took my only seat at the very famous Steamboat. I know I rode him fair, but the big man, who weighed 350 pounds, told me I did not, so who was I to argue with a man that size?

Yes, Steamboat was a very great and famous horse but, in my opinion, he

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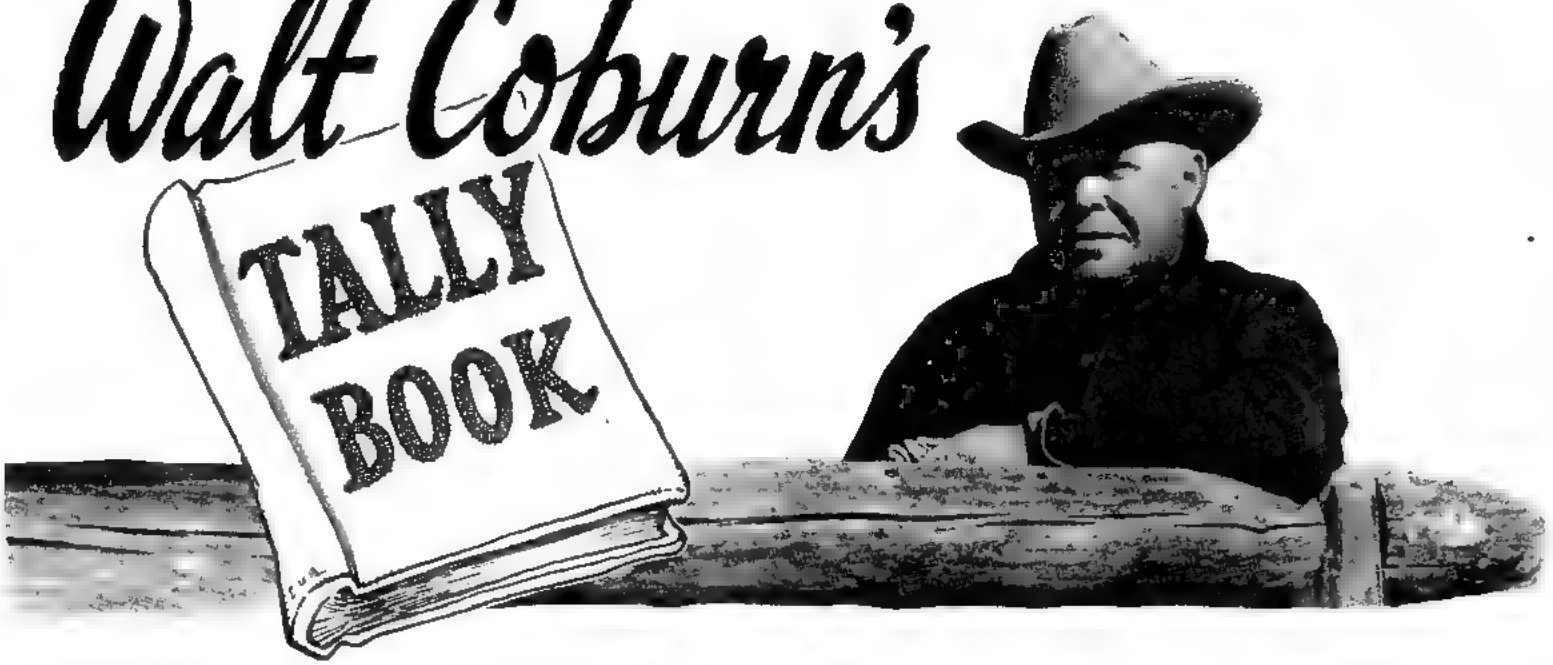
Alice Sisty (Hinkle) rides her two horses Roman-style over her Cord automobile.

Kansas City, Missouri Public Library

Walt Coburn's TALLY BOOK



AS I RECALL, I must have been about six years old when I saw my first roundup. And that was the day I first met Dead Eye Charlie.

The outfit was camped on Big Warm Creek, about twenty miles from the home ranch. My father took me out, and I still remember the horse he was riding, a flea-bitten, chunky quarter-horse called Gray Billy. I was riding my own pony, Snowflake, and a brand new round-skirted saddle made for me by a Fort Benton saddlemaker. My legs were too short even when the stirrups were shortened to the last hole, so they had to whittle off the tops of each stirrup fender. Snowflake was as fat as a butter ball and my short legs stuck out sideways. I had not yet learned how to crawl into my saddle by hauling myself up by the saddle strings. That part of my cowboy education was to come later. I had to be lifted on and when it came time to dismount, that was up to me.

The wagons were camped on the creek and we got there about ten in the morning, as the last cattle drives were being brought in by the circle riders to the holdup grounds. My father pointed in the other direction to where a big bunch of cattle were grazing.

"That's the day herd," he said, "Four-year-old beef steers."

He expected me to listen close to everything he said concerning cattle, horses, or cowpunching in general.

"You ride over and talk to the cowhands on day herd," he told me. "Tell them who you are and try to learn something. You can't start in too young, if you expect to learn the cattle business. Don't be scared to ask questions. You got to get over being timid and acting like you were scared of your own shadow."

That was about the only thing I wasn't scared of. I was half-scared of my iron-gray bearded father and his stern ways and also my two half-brothers, Will and Bob, who were 100 per cent cowmen. My half-brother Wallace was the only man of the family I wasn't scared of.

"You stay on day herd till dinner time, then come to camp," my father said. I knew he didn't want me underfoot while they worked the cattle on the holdup grounds, cutting the cows with unbranded calves into one bunch, the beef steers into another cut.

I SAID, "Yes, sir," and headed for the day herd. The man who sat his horse on a little rise had one leg hooked across his saddle horn watching the cattle as they grazed. His back was toward me as I rode up. Then he turned half way around to see who it was.

I took one look at the man and pulled up. I was never more scared in my life. His straight, coarse, black hair needed cutting and hung down halfway to his shoulder. His face was covered with a heavy black beard that came up to his high cheekbones. He had a large black patch over one eye. It seemed to me that his good eye made up for the bad one. It had a red-black glitter, like a hot coal burning.

I was frozen like a scared cottontail as the man stared hard at me and said nothing. All I wanted to do was to get away from there, out of sight of the black-bearded man with the black patch.

Then he laughed. It was an amused chuckling that squinted his glittering eye and showed his big white teeth. That tore it for me. I began kicking with both heels and slapping Snowflake from side to side with long bridle reins.

But Snowflake had a mind of his own and wanted to stay there. He planted his forefeet and kicked up behind. I quit slapping with the reins and grabbed the saddle horn. I didn't want to get thrown and left there afoot. Snowflake stopped kicking up and just stood tracked.

"That was shore a purty bronc ride you made," Black Patch said with a chuckle. "I never saw a purtier ride. Ten jumps I counted."

He knew I was scared at the sight of him and it amused him. He was still chuckling when he pointed towards a big prairie dog town on the flat where the cattle were scattered out.

"Those prairie dogs are sure mad," he told me. "They don't like the cattle grazing across their town. They're having a meeting about it. You see that biggest mound, right about the center? That's where the mayor of dogtown lives. See him, sitting there, barking his head off, indignant like. He's calling all the he-prairie dogs in town, telling them to get their wives and kids underground where it's safe.

"From where I'm sitting I can count six little prairie dog owls, batting their big yellow-green eyes and saying nothing and looking wise. The owls are blind in the daytime, but they keep it a secret from the prairie dogs. You can learn a lesson from them. If you don't know the answer, say nothing and look wise.

"The owls hoot plenty at night when they can see and the prairie dogs can't see no better'n you or me at night. Then the owls tell it scary and even the big paunchy mayor never lets out so much as a yip to call the owl a liar. Right now the owls can't see the cattle and they figure the fat prairie dog mayor is just showing off for the rest of the town.

"Those steers must look mighty big and dangerous to a little bitty prairie dog. How would you and me feel about it if some big old dinosaur monsters loomed up in big droves and commenced trompin' down our houses? I bet we'd hunt our holes."

He let out that chuckling laugh that had spooked me. But I was no longer afraid. Something in the tone of his voice and the way he talked me into watching the dog town, drove any fear I had of him out of my system. I was laughing with him before I knew it, and from that day on we were close friends.

AS WE rode together around the day herd he pointed out a long-billed curlew and we watched her lead us away from her hidden nest. She dropped one wing as though she were crippled and couldn't fly and led us off about a quarter of a mile, then she took off, her curlew squawk mocking us. Dead Eye Charlie had pointed out her nest hidden under a big sagebrush and I liked him for not getting down and handling the eggs.

We dismounted and watched a big ant hill, and I forgot all about dinner till he looked up at the sun and said we might as well go to camp and get the wrinkles out of our bellies.

I knew by that time that a horse had kicked out his eye and he wore the patch

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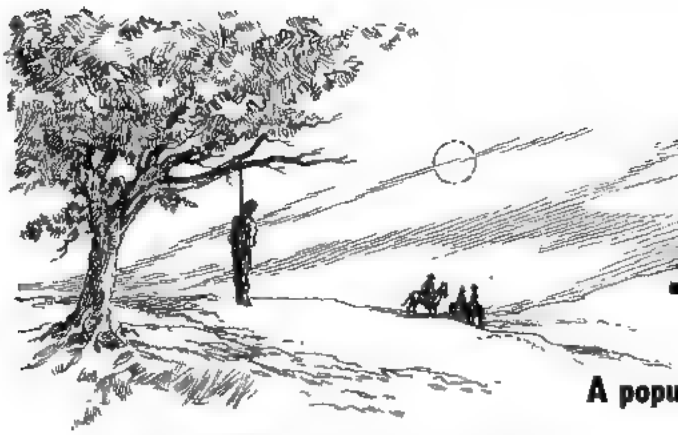

By C. L. SONNICHSEN

JUSTICE AFTER DARK

A popular lawman suddenly finds himself on the wrong side of the bars and the wrong side of a posse

Reprinted from *I'll Die Before I'll Run* by C. L. Sonnichsen Published by Devin-Adair Company, New York, N.Y., 1962

THIS STORY begins about the time the first pangs of civilization began to be felt in the neighborhood of Old Fort Griffin, a hundred and some odd miles west of Fort Worth, Texas, and known far and wide as the Babylon of the Border. There is not much left of the old place now—a deep cistern, the powder magazine, the old bakery (minus its roof), and a wall or two of one of the officers' quarters, all overgrown with brush and tall grass and infested with rattlesnakes. Below the hill on which the fort was built, in the valley of the Clear Fork of the Brazos, are more extensive relics of the town of Griffin where three or four hundred permanent inhabitants once went about their legitimate business, and a large floating population operated less legitimately. It was a wicked town which "had its man for breakfast" many a morning, but it was exciting and alive, and the men and women of Albany have tried to recapture a little of its vigor and gusto in an annual "fandangle" held on the site of the old fort.

The post was established in 1867 for frontier protection against wild Indians whose depredations were a constant menace until the middle Seventies. For the first few years of its existence the military authority was the only law in the region and things went pretty well. Then in 1874 the County of Shackleford was organized; control passed to the civil authorities; and a wave of immigration brought in a mob of gamblers, gunmen, bad women, thieves and crooks of every description. Griffin was headquarters for the long-haired buffalo hunters; the Dodge City cattle trail passed by it; and wild cowboys yipped and yelled in its dozen-odd saloons and honkytonks every night. There was a constant movement of frontier characters in and out, and vice and murder flourished.

Soon after the organization, the town of Albany, now the county seat, was laid out and a mushroom village of canvas and shacks sprang up. The only hotel in town was a big tent with cots scattered about inside and an eating tent off to one side. For a long time the ladies did their shopping at Griffin, fifteen miles north, breathing deep sighs of relief when they got home, but gradually the population grew. In 1881 Judge Clark persuaded the railroad to go through the town by giving them some right of way and a block for the depot, and after that it was just a matter of waiting for the place to grow up. There were growing pains, however.

Being pretty far out toward the arid plains, this part of Texas was not considered good farming country in those days. Mrs. Matthews in her book, *Interwoven*, says the residents of Griffin did not even try to raise gardens because the rainfall was too uncertain. Nevertheless a good many farmers and small ranchers took up land in the bottoms. At old Camp Cooper near Griffin there was one nest of them known as "the grangers," originally from Grimes County, who were heard from when the feuding started.

The thing that brought the trouble on was an organized ring of stock thieves who ran off both cows and horses to the Indian Territory, defying pursuit and killing anybody who tried to interfere with them. As usual they had confederates among the settlers. By 1876 things were so bad they could hardly have been worse. The *Frontier Echo* over at Jacksboro remarked that "the stealing of horses has become so frequent that the losers could not purchase fresh stock fast enough to satisfy the demand of the horse thief" and suggested that "no medicine will reach the case but blue whistlers or hemp."

This state of affairs called for a strong, determined character to set things right, and the man who seemed to be anointed for the emergency was John M. Larn.

DARK-EYED, athletic, fine-featured and graceful, Larn was probably the best-looking cowboy who ever came to Shackleford County, but he had more than good looks to offer, for he was pretty well educated, ambitious, brave, a fine shot, and a natural leader who made friends anywhere he went. Nobody knows much about his background, but one contemporary account says he came from Colorado, and others mention Dodge City, Kansas, as his home. Shortly after his arrival he made friends with one of the best families in the county, became their ranch foreman, fell in love with one of their lovely young daughters, and married her in spite of the uneasiness of her parents.

They were both very young (Larn was not much more than twenty-one), but it could have been a perfect marriage. Mary Larn undoubtedly worshiped her husband and never wavered in her belief in him. On his side there was an unfailing devotion to her and their two children. She was heard to say that he never had spoken a cross word to her in his life. They prospered in the cattle business and built a fine, two-story rock ranch house on the site of abandoned Camp Cooper near Griffin on the Clear Fork. Larn was ambitious to make the most of what he had, and nobody foresaw anything but happiness for them.

Larn had a great reputation for courage and audacity, and lived through some hair-raising scrapes in Indian-fighting days. In March of 1874 he was the subject of a story in the *Dallas Herald* about an escape from a band of raiders: "Mr. John Larn, who lives about six miles from the post on Clear Fork of Brazos, was out horse hunting last Wednesday. When in the vicinity of Flat Top Mountain he found his horses. He heard men talking and soon saw horsemen approaching him rapidly, and supposing it to be Lieut. Jones' scout, he continued on toward them, when they suddenly divided so as to encircle him. He then discovered that it was Indians. Riding a fleet animal, he did some expert riding for five or six miles, closely pursued by twelve or fifteen savage fiends yelling and shooting. He got in about dark. Following Larn nearly to his home, the Indians obliqued to the right, going through the Matthews' field, taking his horses, then crossed the river, getting G. R. Carter's, John Newcomb's and John Selman's horses, getting, in all, nearly twenty head. They then turned down the Clear Fork, and were followed by citizens to near Brownin's *(sic)* ranch. On hearing this intelligence, General Buell dispatched, last night at about 8 P.M., Captain Lee and a scout of twenty men and four Tonks, with seven days rations."

They decided to make Larn sheriff. Jacobs, the old sheriff, was not making much progress, and the solid citizens thought some new and young blood might make a difference. The Commissioners' Minutes of Shackleford County show that Larn was sworn in on April 18, 1876. He was only twenty-five years old at this time.

One of his first acts in his new office was to appoint as his deputy a man who had been his neighbor and business associate for some time. John Selman was the man's name. He was a dark, angular, uncommunicative fellow, an all-around gambler, horse trader, and gun toter who twenty years later became famous for killing John Wesley Hardin in an El Paso saloon. He must have had a good deal of intelligence, for the Rangers spoke of him later as a hard one to catch.

LARN AND SELMAN started out strong. According to Edgar Rye, who came to Shackleford County a few weeks before the events he describes, one of their first assignments was to arrest a tough cowboy named Shorty Collins, a desperate fellow with a long record. Larn told him he was under arrest, and when he reached for his gun Selman laid him out as cold as a "Texas norther."

Of course the real reason Larn was

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Photos From a Private Collection

Biggs Saloon and Jacobs & McCombs Feed Store were busy places when the town of Albany was in its infancy.

put into office was to break up the thieves' ring which was stealing the cattlemen blind. Edgar Rye calls it the McBride-English-Townsend gang, but it seems that one Henderson was the real leader, or at least the worst villain of the band. After a bad robbery and murder in Jones County, the first county west of Shackleford, Larn was given a warrant for Henderson's arrest and disappeared in pursuit. On April 27, Marshal Gilson got a telegram from Larn saying that he had arrested Bill Henderson in Dodge City, Kansas, and was bringing him back. About the first of June he did bring him back, along with another member of the gang named Floyd. The responsible citizens rubbed their hands and congratulated themselves. This was the sort of man they needed to run the sheriff's office in that county.

Earlier, however, a vigilance committee had been organized on the best secret-society model. Nobody was supposed to know who the members actually were, but lists of the membership (possibly conjectural) are in existence, and some very important names appear on the rolls. Don Biggers in his reliable *Shackleford County Sketches*, says Larn was "a long time chief in the vigilance committee."

They went right to work. The *Frontier Echo* for April 14, 1876, recorded their first successful foray: "The gang of horse and cattle thieves which have infested Shackleford County for some time past has received a death blow at the hands of the cow men of that section. Joe Watson, the supposed leader of the gang, Charles McBride, 'Reddy' and Dan (—) were hunted down and killed. McBride was hung near Griffin, Watson, Dan (—) and Reddy were shot, captured and hung. Much rejoicing among the good citizens at Griffin and this place over the affair, as the men were notorious desperadoes and the country is better off without them."

On April 20 they accounted for Houston Faught. He had been caught in the act of stealing a horse, was wounded, captured, and put in the military hospital at the fort. About eleven o'clock on the night of his death, a party (composed of "some of the best citizens of the place") escorted Faught to the river bottoms where there was a good selection of trees, and hanged him thoroughly. On his clothes they pinned a card which read: "Horse thief No. 5, that killed and scalped that boy for Indian sign. Shall horse thieves rule the country? He will have company soon."

Public sentiment was undoubtedly behind the vigilance committee. When the *McKinney Enquirer* suggested whipping, branding, and hanging, in that order, for first, second, and third offenses in that matter of horse stealing, the *Frontier Echo* laughed derisively: "Get out with your nonsense; what's the use of all that bother? Hang 'em first, then if they persist in their innocent amusement, cremate them. If that does not put the kibosh on 'em we don't know what will."

The higher-ups naturally could not see it this way. The governor issued a statement blaming the local officers for mob activity, and the *Echo* for May 19 quoted him: "I have never heard of a sheriff or a jailer being hurt, or one of them hurting any of the assailants; nor have I ever known a bona fide, resolute resistance made by a sheriff or a jailer to the demands of a mob fail to be successful."

Judge Fleming in his charge to the grand jury at Jacksboro, June term of 1876, sounded off in the same key: "The Courts, the Juries, and the County officials, gentlemen, are responsible for these infractions of the law."

THE VIGILANTES paid no attention to the protests of governors and judges but went right on hanging. Their next job was done at Albany, the new county seat town. It had no jail as yet—would not have one for some time to come—and when prisoners needed to be secured, the officers had to do some improvising. True, there was one building devoted to public affairs—the courthouse, a primitive edifice of "picket" construction which resembled a barn in size and general effect. There Sheriff Larn's prisoners, Henderson and Floyd, were confined after their unwilling trip from Dodge City in his custody. On June 2 they were still there, but not for long.

About eleven o'clock the prisoners were asleep. Their guards, who were named Wilhelm and Berner, had settled down to the job of lasting out the night, when Wilhelm heard a noise outside. Whether he was expecting to hear a noise or not, the record does not say. At any rate, he stepped to the door where he was confronted by something like fifty men afoot and twenty more on horseback who "rushed toward him with the command to 'put down that gun.'" Wilhelm gave up meekly and so did Berner.

The vigilantes took charge and hustled the prisoners into their clothes. Then they all disappeared into the night with the exception of four men who stayed as a guard over Berner and Wilhelm. In the morning the trail was followed for a quarter of a mile and the two bodies were found hanging to a tree. A local correspondent for the *Frontier Echo*, who recounted these events the day after they happened, remarked with mingled sadness and pride: "It is at best a deplorable state of affairs when Judge Lynch is called to preside; but so far, call them what you may, vigilantes, tall tin hat fellows, or what you please, they have made no mistakes. There is nothing

like knowing your man."

Some months went by before there was another necktie party, but the next hanging was big enough to make up for six months' neglect. Not many details found their way into print but in bare outline the facts are startling enough: "Eleven horse thieves just captured and hung seven miles west of the Fort. Had 27 head of stolen stock. Four more of the band taken just this side of Fort Sill."

It was some time during the next year that John Larn got his contract for supplying beef to the army post. Through the fall of '77 and the early winter of '78 he supplied from one to three beeves per day to the quartermaster, and the peculiar thing about it was that his own herd did not seem to get any smaller. But other people's herds did, and that reminded the suspicious ones of something that had happened in 1874. A man named Bryan who was running stock with Larn, was killed by one of Larn's men, and Larn "kept the cattle without administration."

The grangers near his home complained that their fat stock was disappearing regularly, while the thin stuff always came home on schedule. Apparently some brand blotting was going on, too. There was some kind of showdown between Larn and the cattlemen early in the game, but everything was kept carefully under cover. One account, published shortly after the feud was over, says that his father-in-law interceded and the stockmen "were temporarily pacified," adding that "everyone was afraid to appear as a witness against these men for fear of being bushwhacked."

Either because he was too busy with his butchering, or because of resentment over the feeling that was growing up against him, Larn had resigned his position as sheriff in the spring of 1877 after about a year in office. Edgar Rye, who was not on Larn's side by any means, states that "during the first six months of his term Larn did more to quell lawlessness than any man who served the people as sheriff before or since this time."

The center of infection as the trouble developed was Larn's home ranch, where some very queer things were said to have happened. The first was the disappearance of Wilks and Jones, two stone masons who had constructed a mile of stone fence on the ranch, the price being set at $500. They collected $100, demanded the rest when the job was done, and then suddenly disappeared—at least Larn's enemies said they did.

When two bodies, so badly decomposed that they could not be positively identified, were found in the river later on, the finger of suspicion pointed sharply at Larn and Selman. In justice to them it should be said that the identification of the bodies was doubtful, that the coroner was not convinced that the dead men had met with foul play and refused to call it murder, and that there was talk of one of the "corpses" having been alive later on.

BY NOW the new sheriff, whose name was Bill Cruger, had been stirred up sufficiently to get out a search warrant. Armed with this, a detachment of Rangers invaded the Larn ranch to see what they could find. They must have had a hot tip of some kind, for they immediately started dragging a deep waterhole in the Clear Fork close to Larn's slaughter pens and dredged up a number of hides which had been weighted and sunk. Some of the brands could be made out, and it appeared that the neighboring ranchers and grangers had contributed to the collection. It looked like a clear case, but even yet the law could not cope with Larn and Selman.

The account already quoted *(Galveston News*, July 13, 1878) stated as a fact that "Larn and Selman defied the Rangers and refused to be disarmed or arrested. They repaired to the magistrate's court armed, and forcibly took away the principal witness from the court, and he soon left the country. For the want of this witness' evidence, no information was filed. The hides were at the court to be examined, but from fear of the parties accused and witness gone the prosecution was abandoned."

The reports of Lieutenant G. W. Campbell of the Rangers throw only a little more light on the situation. On February 26, 1878, he wrote to Major Jones from his camp in Throckmorton County, not far from Griffin, that there was "a big excitement in the settlements over making arrests on Jno. M. Laren and Jno. Sillman, charged with stealing cattle and selling them for beef, they have been furnishing the town of Griffin for some time, the citizens swore out a search warrant and I served it, and found six beef hides in the bed of Clear Fork, not in their own brands (Laren and Sillman's)—taken them to Fort Griffin and turned them over to the officer, a compromise was made and the parties were released . . . ."

Later accounts have stated that 200 hides bearing brands of all the nearby stock owners, were found in the waterhole. Lieutenant Campbell's report, indicating that there were only a few hides and that the brands appeared to have been blotted, makes the evidence against Larn sound much less impressive. At the time the hides were found, he himself swore that the whole thing was a frame-up.

This, at any rate, was the start of a feud situation. Larn's neighbors, the grangers, began to go in groups and stay home after dark. They found their horses shot on the prairie, wantonly killed. And they told stories of armed bands of men calling at their houses at night trying to get them to come to the door, of attempts at bushwhacking, and of daylight pursuits of one or another of their number.

About the first of February a granger out hunting his calves disappeared and did not come back. Another named Lancaster, who was supposed to have given information which led to the first arrest of Larn and Selman, likewise disappeared one day and was found by a deputy sheriff, who had been sent for, hiding in the brush along the river. He swore that Larn and Selman had chased him, fired at him, wounded him, and would have killed him if they could.

It was said, while all this was going on, that the grangers were so terrified "that they ceased to work their crops, kept close in their houses, and would not even go to their cowpens to milk, sending their wives out to transact all their business that was attended to. Few of them undressed themselves at night for two weeks for fear of an attempt to mob. They were trying to sell their places, improved river valley land, with growing crops, for a pittance to get away on."

How tense the situation was is best revealed in two letters written to Major Jones. The first was written on June 15 by Sergeant J. E. Van Riper. He reported: "Through a sense of duty and justice to this country I am induced to report to you, though it will be but a feeble endeavor to portray a just and true state of affairs in this section of the country, which are in a terrible stage—armed parties of men are continually riding the country—riding at midnight into the door yards of peaceable citizens and discharging their firearms frightening women and children, citizens are being run out of the country, leaving their property. Mr. Treadwell and others living in the neighborhood of Jno. M. Lauren and Jno. H. Sellman are continually finding their horses and cattle shot down on the prairies. Milch cows and calves are shot down on the premises after nightfall. They have recently lost several hundred dollars worth of stock

(Continued on page 57)

Early photo of Fort Griffin—date unknown

Eagle waterfront today. The buildings are padlocked, including the old customs building in the center.

EAGLE

Fifth in the series of "Ghosts Along The Yukon"

By MICHAEL JENKINSON

Photos by Karl Kernberger

IN THE glory-days of the Yukon River, around the turn of the century, steamboat passengers coming downriver into Alaska had an impressive first view of the Stars and Stripes. Around a long bend from the border, suddenly in the wilderness there was a crowd of riverboats along the shore, a dignified quay of warehouses, offices, and a customs building flying the American flag.

The waterfront seethed with activity, for this was Eagle, exuberant river port boasting more than 3,000 population at a time when Fairbanks was a mere handful of ax-hewn cabins, and Anchorage not yet even dreamed of.

Today, from a distance, Eagle still looks as it did when the Yukon was a major artery of commerce. A handsome row of waterfront buildings sits on a high bank above the river; behind them streets cut back into the forest, lined with frame and log cabins. But there is a hush about Eagle now, a lack of movement on worn boardwalks. All of the doors along the quay are padlocked, and most of the cabins in the town behind them are deserted. Only nine people still live year around at Eagle.

The majority of the early-day towns on the upper Yukon were spanked into life by gold strikes. Eagle came into being because of a gilded hoax.

All historians of the period have agreed that the North West Mounted Police did a remarkable job of preserving law and order in Dawson, hub of the Klondike gold fields. But the restrictions of the "Queen's Redcoats" irritated two free-wheeling cowpunchers from Montana, Howard and Jim Hudson, and they moved downriver until they found a likely cabin site where the arm of the law would be a little shorter. Things seemed lonely, however, and so to get some neighbors as well as quick assets, the brothers staked out a townsite.

All they needed now were people, and people, as everyone knew, went where the gold was. Accordingly, they returned to Dawson with moosehide pokes filled with sand. They had sprinkled a thin layer of gold dust on top of the sand, and with this they paid for drinks on the house at several Dawson saloons. They were carrying what were known as $20,000 pokes, as this was about the amount of gold dust they could carry.

THE SPREE stirred up a great deal of interest. As the evening wore on, the brothers became whiskey-mellow, and soon were confiding to one and all where they had made their strike, which just happened to be in cat-throwing distance of the townsite they had staked.

The rush was on. Although little gold was ever found close by, Eagle had come into being.

Yet, in an odd twist of circumstance, gold was soon discovered in creeks and hollows to the south and east, and Eagle, commercial center and shipping point, flourished because of the camps that formed on these placers.

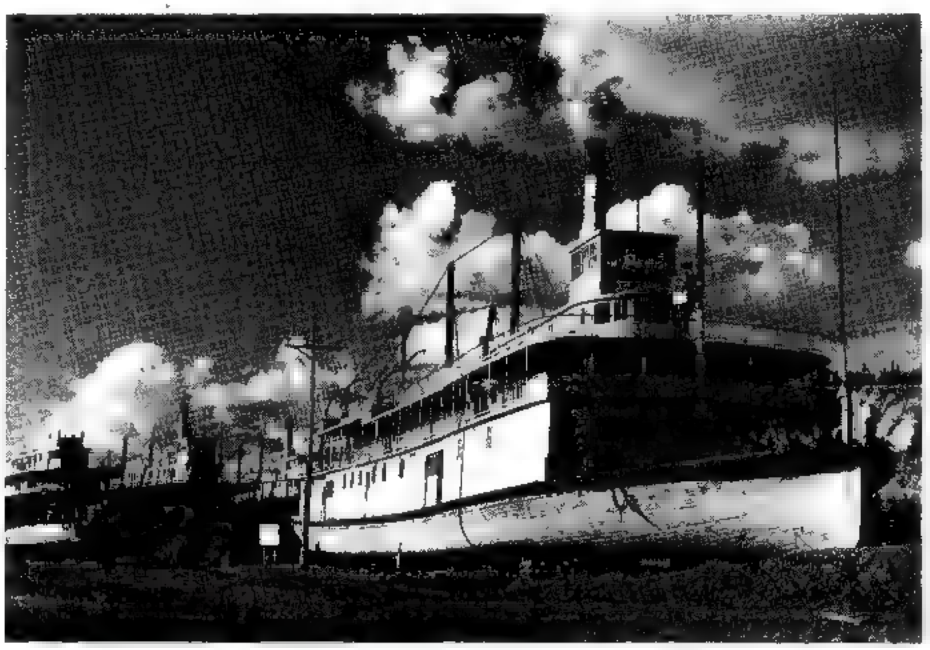
Many of these towns, like Eagle itself, were named with patriotic fervor: Liberty, Nation, Star City—as were the gold gulches: Washington, Independence, and Fourth of July. At the time of the Klondike rush, the boundary between the Yukon Territory of Canada and Alaska was at times in dispute, and miners on the American side of the line apparently felt such nomenclature would solidify their position.

Much of Eagle's importance was derived from its function as customs station on the water route to the Klondike. Through it, bound for Dawson, went silks and pianos, porcelain chamber pots and walking sticks, hogsheads of whiskey and sacks of wheat. Through it, coming out of the Klondike, funneled a steady stream of gold—bricks, nuggets, and dust. On occasion, several steamboats tied up at Eagle in a single afternoon.

During the winter, when the river was frozen, Eagle was a much-welcomed stopover on the dogsled trail which wound from Dawson out to Circle City and beyond. The story is told of a prospector who ran out of supplies on this route, midway between Eagle and Dawson. By the time he was within a day's travel from Dawson, starvation had so sapped his energy that he collapsed in the snow, unable to continue without food. The same was true of his sled dog, which had fallen in its traces.

As the gaunt prospector watched its deep and steady breathing, an idea came to him. Unsheathing his razor-sharp hunting knife, he slashed off the animal's tail,

(Continued on page 55)



Hundreds of steamers once plied the river's length serving young mining camps such as Eagle. Today, abandoned hulks line the river's shores. The large, luxurious *Klondike* (foreground) was the last of the mighty Yukon steamers to see service.

BOWS and ARROWS Versus

Curtis Bellows
Photos Courtesy Author

Horace "Bart" Bellows

By DOROTHY ROBERTSON

IN SOME of the sleepy little hamlets out in the West you can still dig up surprising stories of a century ago that have only been partially told. Such a one is the bitter feud beginning in 1863 between Horace "Bart" Bellows and sub-chief Big Foot of the Paiutes.

W. A. Chalfant, late historian, newspaper editor and son of pioneers of the region, recounts in his *Story of Inyo*, many of the events connected with Bart Bellows.

The feud itself and its consequences are known today to less than a handful of people. George Brown of Olancha, California, a village at the southern end of Owens Lake, told me he had known old Bart when he (George) was a hero-worshipping youngster and had been given the historic muzzle loader and powder flask. George lent me some old photographs of the principals, and told me where to find Curtis Bellows' grave in the Soldiers' Cemetery. Curtis was the innocent instrument of the trouble, and his death was one of the causes of the massacre at Owens Lake.

On July 4, 1862, in answer to the settlers' request for soldiers, Camp Independence was established at Little Pine. Little Pine then became known as Independence.

By the spring of 1863 the Paiutes were sullenly resentful and becoming hungrier despite the doling out of rations by the military. Homesteaders were swarming in, as were prospectors and miners. The Indians' best seedlands, game ranges, and fishing streams had been preempted. Worse, the miners were decimating the piñon trees, source of the Indians' precious winter staple. These pinenuts were particularly rich in nutritious oils, and up to the coming of the whites, had been jealously guarded from other tribes. Each tribe claimed certain sections of mountain country and established boundaries.

Curtis and Bart Bellows, together with an old boyhood chum named Henry Badger, had come to California to try their luck in mineral-rich Inyo County. That spring the Bellows brothers, Henry Badger, Milton Lambert and two men named Crohn and Walker, were mining at the Ida Mine east of Manzanar in Owens Valley. The men worked in groups or pairs, for too many lone prospectors were being picked off by the Indians.

On March 1, Camp Independence authorities noticed that wily old Chief George had quietly slipped away from camp after receiving his rations. On March 2, a band of several hundred Indians composed of men, women and children, were observed across the river, leaving the valley.

At dusk of March 2, Hiram McDonald up at Big Pine Creek some fifteen to twenty miles to the north, was killed by Indians while his partners, the three Ayres brothers, were upstream and out of sight.

Not long before, some Indians who had come into possession of white men's guns but were without bullets, had conceived the bright notion of stealing the lead pipe which supplied the Ida Camp with water from a distant spring. This theft necessitated the fetching and carrying of water to the camp, which was a half-mile away. The morning of March 6 had been cold and clear when Curtis Bellows and Milt Lambert went to fill their water buckets at the spring.

Lambert had filled his pails and had started back when a piercing yell whirled him around. He was just in time to see his friend and partner fall, mortally wounded and bristling with arrows. Lambert raced for the cabin, the redskins in hot pursuit. As he neared the cabin, Lambert shouted commands as though he were telling his comrades inside of the danger. He succeeded in fooling the Indians who suddenly hesitated, then scattered for the safety of the rocky hills.

Lambert raced back to the spring, but Curtis was dead. He lost no time heading for Camp Independence and help; then he sent word to Bart Bellows.

MEANWHILE the Alney L. McGee party, en route to Vissalia from Aurora with a herd of horses, arrived at Big Pine Creek. They were horrified to find McDonald's body on the creek bank. When many signal smokes were discovered rising from Fish Springs to the south, they began to put distance between themselves and the Indians, but they were not to escape. A body of redskins was advancing up the trail.

Hoping to find safety across the river, the party attempted a crossing but found the river at low ebb. Their wagons mired in the mud and the team had to be cut loose. The two women and little girl of the party were put on horses, the men splashing alongside holding to the manes. Soon a running fight developed.

Poor Charley Tyler, a Negro, was unable to catch a mount, and was overtaken and killed. The low mound just south of the Los Angeles aqueduct intake near Aberdeen is named Charley's Butte in his honor, for that was where he met his death. The McGees reached the fort by late afternoon. Bart Bellows had hastened there also, to ride with the avenging troopers.

At the Ida Camp, Bart knelt by his brother's dead body and wept. "An eye for an eye!" he vowed, and promised Curtis he'd get every last one of the bushwhacking redskins. The Indians, naturally, were gone. Bart scouted carefully for tracks and noticed over a dozen barefoot prints. One set in particular caught his eye because of its great size and one missing toe. When he discovered the prints behind a large bush near the spring, and in direct line with Curtis' body, he knew this Big Foot was the killer. His arrows had entered Curtis' heart.

Lieutenant Doughty led his detail north to the Black Rocks stronghold of the Indians on March 12, and Bart Bellows again went along. But the Indians, over 300 strong and well entrenched, were difficult to dislodge. The prudent and outnumbered whites withdrew.

Early on March 19 some thirty-seven warriors were observed heading south single file from Chief George's rancheria on George's Creek, between Independence and Lone Pine. Captain Ropes, in command of the fort, guessed they might be going to intercept James White, mailrider from Visalia. He sent Lieutenant Doughty with twenty soldiers to follow them. Many armed civilians joined the

ELECTRON

A deadly duel that wouldn't end 'til the quiver was empty, the shot pouch was empty—and one or both men were dead . . .

MUZZLE LOADER

small force and trailed the Indians through the Alabama Hills, catching up with them in the afternoon at a ravine near Cottonwood Creek, five miles south of the head of Owens Lake. A fight lasting some four hours ensued, after which the Indians were driven into the icy waters.

The escaping swimmers, hampered by a strong wind and revealed by a full moon, were easily picked off as they bobbed about on the surface. The whites established a cordon along the shore, then settled down to wait for morning.

Thirty-three bodies washed ashore that grisly dawn, but one Indian was seen racing west for the mountains, making derisive gestures at the furious whites who had discovered his escape too late.

Later Bart found a pair of waterlogged moccasins by bare footprints along the southern shore. Furiously, he noted the tell-tale missing toe. Big Foot!

Friendly Indians later told Bart the renegade sub-chief had boasted to "tame" Indians how he had escaped the whites. He had submerged beneath the waters, breathing through a hollow tule stalk, and so made his way safely to a hidden place by the shore.

ON APRIL 13, 1863, Big Foot and his men killed three miners and a woman, burned the cabin of the Combination Camp over in the Panamint Mountains, then fled.

Various hit and run outbreaks occurred at scattered outposts, but on the whole the Indian population had, as one oldtimer put it, "seed the light and settled down."

Almost two years later, January 1, 1865, the renegades sneaked back into Owens Valley and attacked the lonely way station at Haiwai Meadows. Mrs. McGuire and her little son, Johnny, were killed. Mr. McGuire had gone to Lone Pine for materials.

Now the entire Valley was up in arms. A punitive force rode to Haiwai, tracked the footprints, and found the trail split. One set of tracks had gone southwest toward the Kern River Trail; the other, showing some ten Indian footprints, went north and east toward a large Indian camp on the northeast shore of Owens Lake.

Late on the night of January 5, approximately thirty-two incensed civilians, determined to end these ambushes for good, rode to the Indian camp. Snow muffled the horsemen's approach so that the entire camp was caught asleep and cut down as they rushed from their wickiups.

For the crimes of the ten who had sneaked into camp, over three-fourths of the innocent Indians there were killed. For years thereafter the tribe remained sullen and defiant.

In 1870, Bart Bellows filed a preemption claim on Haiwai Meadows. Stages and freighters stopped at his way station, for Owens Valley was booming. Later Bart imported around 8,000 Angora goats and Haiwai became known as the Goat Ranch.

As for Big Foot, the Valley knew him no more.

ONE day while Bart was out hunting along the Sierra foothills west of the present Dunmovin, he became aware of fresh, barefoot prints going up a canyon toward timberline. Something about the outsize prints caused him to bend closer, examining them. Suddenly his heart began to pound. There was one missing toe! His brother's killer, Big Foot, was near at hand!

For hours Bart trailed the Indian, gun ready. He was a good hunter and tracker, and he was sure he had not alerted his quarry. He knew too, his first shot must tell. And then he saw his enemy, face to face!

One startled glance, and the Indian was off. Bart had not been quick enough. It was a deadly game of hide and seek. The Indian was short, powerful, with enormous splayed feet. He carried a bow and a quiver of arrows. The men zigzagged through the piñon pines, dodging behind the trunks for cover. Several times arrows slammed into the protecting tree trunks, pinning Bart's clothing to the bark.

Then Big Foot raced for the dubious safety of a lone pine near the center of a small flat. There was no place else to go.

Bart was in a better position, but Big Foot kept him pinned behind a tree. Cautiously he turned sideways, to minimize his bulk, holding the muzzle loader at the ready. At the first chance, he must shoot. Time had run out.

And then Big Foot, impatient, leaned out to see why the white man was so quiet. It was now or never. Deliberately, Bart aimed and fired. Curtis' murder was finally avenged.

For forty years Bart Bellows ranched at Haiwai, employing Indian labor. Then, in the early 1900s, Bart sold out. He moved to Long Beach where he died at age eighty-two.

In pioneer times, Indians who worked for white ranchers and lived on their property more often than not took their employers' names. In Lone Pine today, there are still a number of Indian families who bear the unlikely name of Bellas—a derivative of Bellows.

Curtis Bellows lies in the Old Soldiers Cemetery at Independence, California. The date on the tombstone (below) is in error: it should be March 6, 1863. George Brown (right) of Olancha, California, with the muzzle loader given him sixty years ago by Bart Bellows.

Courtesy of Harry Greenmun

Courtesy Author

WHO KILLED OLIVER YANTIS?

By DANIEL D. HUNT
and
JOSEPH W. SNELL

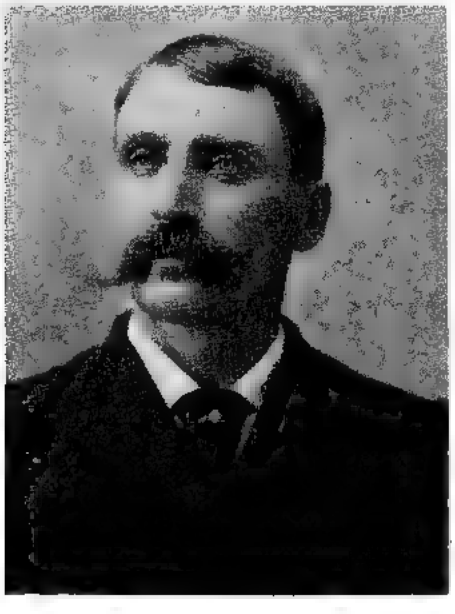
Photos Courtesy
Kansas State Historical Society

THE ANSWER to this minor but apparently controversial question has finally been found in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society. One very well-known Western writer states Yantis died at the hands of Chris Madsen; another gave the honor to Tom Houston; and yet another had Houston and Madsen terminating Yantis' career in conjunction. As it turns out, Chris Madsen was not within miles of the shooting affray which ended the life of outlaw Ol Yantis. Instead, four other persons, two of them never before mentioned, were responsible for that bit of frontier justice.

The story of Ol Yantis' last weeks of life begins in late October, 1892, in the far western Kansas town of Garden City, recently the home of Newton Earp, half-brother to the more famous Wyatt.

About October 21 three men, strangers to the community, moved into Mrs. A. C. Bacon's Ohio House. They apparently

Oliver Yantis, dead as a result of a gun battle fought with Sheriff Beeson's posse. The photo was taken for identification purposes and as evidence of the outlaw's death. Sheriff Chalkley M. Beeson (left), Dodge City pioneer, was chiefly responsible for the outlaw's capture.



were from the Texas Panhandle or Oklahoma Territory though they told different stories to different listeners. While in Garden City they would take off on extended trips by horseback or by rail to return in one or two days, silent about their activities. They were particularly careful of their highly bred horses and gave liveryman John Cochran special instructions about their feed and curry.

Then, on October 28, these three silent Southerners checked out of the Ohio House and rode east. The next day they stayed at the ranch home of Jonathan Lees in northern Gray County where their heavy armament caused no little apprehension. At two o'clock in the raw afternoon of November 1 they rode quietly into Speareville, a small town of 200 population located 17 miles west of Dodge City. Attention was elicited because of their fine horses, and it was later recalled that they rode slowly into town, dismounted and led their steeds along the board sidewalk until they were within a few yards of the Ford County Bank. Two of the men passed the reins of their horses to the third, then entered the bank.

Cashier J. R. Baird scarcely noticed the men until one of them began to inquire about a personal loan. The talk ran in this vein for several minutes and Baird made mental notes of their appearance which would stand him in good stead later.

Suddenly one of the visitors drew his pistol and, pointing it at Baird's head, demanded that the cashier throw up his hands. Instead, the banker dropped behind the counter surrounding his office in an effort to grab a pistol kept there for just such an emergency. The bandits were quick, however, and pounced down

The dispute may still go on, but at least we know who collected the reward money!

on him before the gun could be brought into action.

A pistol whipping drove away whatever heroic thoughts remained in Baird's head and the outlaws soon had $1,697 in First National Bank of Dodge City and U. S. Treasury Notes tucked away in their tote bag. The bandits failed to notice a large sum of gold and silver hidden by some loose papers on Baird's desk.

Using the cashier as a shield, the outlaws raced to where the third man waited with the horses, about fifty yards away. Baird was left on the street as the three galloped out of town, heading south, apparently toward No Man's Land, just south of Kansas.

Their flight was not wholly uncontested, for the people of Speareville, perhaps remembering the successful defense of Coffeyville citizenry against the Dalton gang just four weeks earlier, threw at least fifty shots after the escaping outlaws. A party of hunters who had just returned home raced to their baggage wagon, secured their rifles, and were soon in pursuit. Their western ponies were no match for the outlaws' thoroughbreds and the bandits rode safely into the brakes of the Arkansas while hunter J. M. Leidigh exchanged a few ineffectual shots with them.

As darkness fell, the outlaws were seen crossing the Rock Island tracks west of Bucklin and later that night they passed east of Ashland, Gray County, and on into No Man's Land. By daylight all trace of the bank robbers was gone.

OVER IN Dodge City, Ford County Sheriff Chalkley Beeson was not about to let the robbers get away, though they had obviously passed far beyond his jurisdiction. Chalk was one of the old-timers of Dodge City and had been a town leader since his arrival in the mid-1870s. He was a friend and contemporary of Bat Masterson in those days and was noted for the fine music he and his partner, W. H. Harris, served in their Long Branch Saloon. In addition, Beeson and Harris jointly owned the COD cattle ranch south of Dodge while Harris was also vice-president of the Bank of Dodge City. Beeson served his town long and well in both official and unofficial capacities.

In 1892 the cattle town era and the Wild West were gone for Dodge City but the pioneer spirit still coursed hotly in Chalk Beeson's veins—no pseudo-badmen were going to rob a bank in his county and get away with it.

Later, the same day of the robbery, Sheriff Beeson ordered wanted notices printed on a large number of penny post cards. A reward of $450 was offered and complete descriptions of both men and horses given. Within hours Beeson mailed the cards to every town and post office where there was even the slightest chance the robbers might turn up. Now all he could do was sit back and wait for results.

Two weeks passed before, on November 15, a letter arrived from Stillwater, Oklahoma Territory. Hamilton B. Hueston informed the sheriff that three men answering descriptions given on the postal card had been seen in the vicinity. Would

BANK ROBBED. **$450. REWARD.**

Ford County Bank, Speareville Kansas, was robbed to-day by three men. One small dark complexioned man 23 years old, small, very dark mustache and dark clothes; one medium sized man, sandy complexioned, short beard, light hat and clothes; one dark man, 25 years old, medium size dark mustache. Three horses—bay, sorrel and dun, latter with line back, and all of medium size.

Robbers have large number new $5.00 bills issued by First National Bank, Dodge City, Kansas. A reward of $450. is offered.

C. M. BEESON, Sheriff.

Dodge City, Kansas, Nov. 1st, 1892.

N. B.—Keep watch for the $5.00 bills.

Sheriff Beeson sent wanted notices on postal cards to every town and post office where the bank robbers were likely to be seen. Such a card was responsible for the location of the outlaws near Stillwater, O.T.

the sheriff please send someone down to make a positive identification? The sheriff would and did.

The man he chose was John Curran of Garden City, who had boarded with the robbers the week before they held up the bank. Curran arrived in Stillwater on November 24 and three days later, accompanied by Hueston, rode twenty miles west to the residence of Hugh McGinn where one of the bandits was supposed to be staying. McGinn had a brother-in-law named Oliver Yantis, and it was Yantis who fitted Beeson's description.

In an affidavit sworn to on December 24, 1892, Curran wrote that he "approached at that time to the immediate presence of said Oliver Yanties [sic], in day-light, and had a conversation with him, and I then and there recognized Oliver Yanties" as one of the trio who had lived at the Ohio House.

Hueston's affidavit, sworn to on December 23, states that "when they were where Yantis was that he, Yantis, appeared very uneasy and kept his hand on his pistol all the time that he, the affiant, and Curran were talking to him."

Curran and Hueston rode the twenty miles back from Orlando to Stillwater. There Curran sent Sheriff Beeson a letter reporting his identification. The description of the two persons who saw the robbers commit their crime matched the description given by John Curran whose

(Continued on page 50)

Speareville (now Spearville), Kansas, about the time of the bank robbery. Soule and Muncell's Ford County Bank was located in the large brick building to the right.

HIBITED

Photo by June Van Dyke

Nebraska Historical Society—May Gibson Collection

By EVE BALL

At left is a "field" of cow chips ready for gathering. The fuel supply belonging to George Hastings at Hyannis, Nebraska, is shown below. Once they had been gathered, the chips were arranged loosely so air could circulate freely through the stack to facilitate drying. Sights such as this were common around prairie homes, as the entire family was always on the lookout for means to augment the fuel supply.

THE ROLE of the lowly cow chip in the winning and the settlement of the West was tremendous. Without it the encroachment of the white man upon a strip of land hundreds of miles in width, and extending from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, might have been long delayed. After leaving the Cross Timbers, men who traveled westward found scant supplies of wood, and those only upon the banks of streams, until they reached the foothills of the Rockies.

The Indians of the Great Plains ate much of their food raw in the form of jerked meat. They packed it in leather bags made of buffalo hide. But they preferred their jerky heated, and they used the by-product of the vast herds for their fuel. They used it, also, for heating their tepees.

Early explorers and mountain men followed streams along which they could secure wood as long as the watercourses lasted. But when they pushed westward across the Plains, they, too, used the fuel most available and most easily obtained.

MULE TRAINS were sent out from St. Louis bound for the fur-trading posts on the Columbia River. George W. Furse, a young Englishman, when he arrived in New York in 1830, asked the name of the westernmost settlement and was told that it was St. Louis. He made his way to that outpost and was hired by a fur-trading company to go with a mule train to Astoria. The boy had never mounted a horse. An older man quietly and inconspicuously taught him to saddle and mount a mule, and advised him as to selection of clothing needed for the long trek.

Kit Carson and Sublette were employed as guides and hunters for the company of over 100 men. Each was to ride a mule and lead two pack animals laden with casks of pure alcohol. The only food carried by the caravan was salt.

When the train left the river where Marysville, Kansas, was located many years later, it depended upon the cow chip for fuel, and one man was detailed to collect and transport that commodity. George Furse, in the diary he kept on that dangerous journey, wrote that he feared that the duty might be assigned to him but luckily he was spared that indignity. Perhaps they thought him unequal to the task.

In the Apache language, *natzili* means either buffalo or domestic cattle. Around the area in which Amarillo, Texas, is located there was a band of Mescalero Apaches whose chief was called Natzili. When he and his band were forced upon the Mescalero Apache Reservation they had great difficulty in adjusting to the use of wood for fuel.

Between 1875 and 1878 the buffalo herds were almost exterminated. Hunters who killed them for their hides used buffalo chips for fuel. So great was the supply that for many years it sufficed those who crossed the Plains.

In 1869 another Furse, named for his father, was employed to haul flour from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Union, New Mexico. He, too, kept a diary. From the time the heavily laden wagons, each drawn by four yokes of oxen, left Medicine Lodge, they burned cow chips. Each man took his turn at procuring a supply of fuel just as he did at standing guard at night.

And when the first herds were driven northward to markets, the *cocineros* depended upon the despised commodity. Nearly all cooks had an assistant, usually a very young boy who wanted to become a cowboy and who was serving his apprenticeship on the trail. It was the primary duty of this lad to keep the hide (suspended under the chuckwagon) full of chips. If it rained, which it seldom did, the fuel stayed dry. Chips could be ignited easily; they burned quickly and they made a very hot fire.

The cook's flunky was of low rank and had to bear an unmentionable name. However, if the boy performed the menial tasks given him by the cook and took the taunts of his superiors meekly, he could in time become a wrangler. And if he acquitted himself well in that capacity, and proved that he could ride and rope, he eventually was a cowboy.

THEN CAME the day of the big ranches. The range was unfenced, and it remained so until the XIT decided to outline its huge domain with posts and wire. Long before that was done, Oscar Caudill went to work at Black Water Camp as wrangler. He ran away from his home on the Brazos when he was thirteen and was sent to Lassiter who had charge of that line camp. His primary function was keeping a supply of cow chips on hand at all times. He was also cook and housekeeper. He prepared food on the fireplace that heated the shack. Caudill hated and feared his superior, but admitted that so long as the place was kept well supplied with fuel, he had little difficulty.

A cowboy employed at the Yellow Houses once spent the night at the camp and told with great glee of having been sent to ride herd on one of the "furrin" owners of the huge ranch. This man had come from Chicago on a tour of inspection. When he learned that his food was cooked with cow chips he became very angry and refused to eat until the men provided wood. It is said he fasted forty-eight hours before they found enough for the purpose.

Mrs. Bob Wood, of Portales, went to the DZ in New Mexico as wife of the

DISSERTATION on the COW CHIP

Plains country—"where the wind pumped the water and the cows chopped the wood."

foreman. The houses were dugouts or "soddies." They were far apart. Her closest neighbors, miles away, were two men who lived in a line camp. The custom of the country was that if in one's absence strangers came to the house they were welcome to spend the night and to help themselves to food. "But," she said, "woe be unto the centipede who left without washing the dishes and leaving plenty of cow chips inside." This unwritten law was not without justification, for if a man returned to his home in a blizzard he might have much difficulty in finding fuel in the blinding storm and deep drifts. He could live for a while without food, but lack of heat was a different matter.

These two men returned to their house late one evening, and to their disgust and exasperation, found no fuel. Early the next morning they took the trail of their unwelcome guests and overtook the culprits in Tascosa. They invited the men to return with them and they enforced acceptance of the invitation with their six-shooters. They kept the guests overnight, fed them, and fed their horses. After both meals they pointed to the dishpan and saw that the dishes were washed. Then they produced what gunny sacks they had and required their visitors to fill them with cow chips. After a supply had been placed inside, they had the rest stacked on the north side of the door, which faced east. When the renegades were permitted to depart they took off in a high lope and were never seen in those parts again.

IN WESTERN KANSAS a terrible blizzard came up suddenly one Easter Sunday. Hundreds of cattle froze. A week later when men could get out to investigate conditions at their neighbors' homes, they found one family dead in their house. They had exhausted their supply of cow chips, and had burned the furniture. They had torn up the boards from the floors and burned them. They had brought three horses into the house —and those, too, were frozen.

Nor did the function of the prairie fuel cease with the advent of the homesteaders. Ranches were still large, and houses far apart. On the Llano Escatado in New Mexico ranchers could not have existed without cow chips. Frontier women felt that they were fortunate to live "where the wind pumped the water and the cows chopped the wood." Though many of them worked cattle with their husbands, when the supply of fuel was low the family took the wagon out to replenish it.

In very cold weather a big load was required each week to keep a house comfortable. The provident attempted to keep a big supply on hand; in fact, the community standing of the family could easily be determined by the size of the pile of fuel beside the house.

Regardless of the size of the family, few houses had more than one room. When and if a second one was added, it was usually a lean-to, erected primarily for storing fuel. Being able to replenish the fire in the black iron stoves without going out-of-doors was a luxury few could afford.

Cow chips made a very hot fire and left a huge residue of ashes. These were not wasted, for they constituted a valuable covering for the inevitable "path." During a prolonged norther one rancher complained that for six days he'd seen his wife only as he went into the house with a sack of cow chips and she left it with a bucket of ashes.

Mrs. Jerry Wilson, whose home is on a ranch near Elida, New Mexico, tells of a feud that originated in her vicinity. Mrs. Wilson would not give the names of the belligerent participants, for both are very much alive. To this day, though they speak, they do not fraternize.

Mrs. X, while working cattle with her young son, many miles from home on open range, ran upon a plot of several acres covered with well-dried cow chips. Had she discovered a gold mine she could hardly have been more elated. Mother and son dismounted and began gathering and stacking the fuel in piles. While working Mrs. X recalled having heard that during a prolonged drouth a rancher

(Continued on page 51)

The pioneers were not the only ones to benefit from cow chips. They were used extensively as fuel during the depression years of the Thirties.

Nebraska State Historical Society

HONOR to the BRAVE

By HOMER WILKES

JOHN Benjamin Townsend's initials were painted on the crown of his hat. Secretly admiring an odd character, Arizonans of the year 1870 welcomed him to their Territory heartily. A thirty-five-year-old Texian, the newcomer was half-Cherokee.

The soft-voiced man with the peculiar hat located north of Phoenix at the juncture of Aqua Fria River and Black Canyon Creek. There Townsend established a home for his wife, Elizabeth, and their five children.

Word soon got around that the new farmer was peculiar about something other than his hat. The man lived with an undying hatred. His parents having been killed by Comanches, Townsend despised all Indians.

Lots of people hated Indians, yet Townsend's manner of giving vent to his hatred amazed most frontiersmen. He launched solitary night attacks on the Apache-Tontos who sometimes prowled around his farm during their periodic forays.

When the moon was full, Townsend would "cut" for Indian sign. Finding it, he would venture out at night and search for savages. Upon locating his enemies, he would slip up and kill them. Although he never discussed his nocturnal encounters, he is credited with the single-handed slaying of twenty-seven Arizona Indians.

The 4th of June, 1871, being a full moon night, Townsend took his usual precautions against surprise by savages. Discovering sign, he stalked two warriors in the corn field during the night and killed them. The remaining Indians promptly fled after first setting fire to the barn.

At first light Townsend and Ed Wright, a neighbor, started in pursuit of the marauders. The trail soon indicated the raid on Townsend's farm had been carried out by a small group of Indians belonging to a larger party. The white men believed the culprits were from Chief Red Ant's band of Apache-Tontos.

Leading north, the trail went to the ranch of Herbert and Nathan Bowers on the Aqua Fria River about twenty miles east of Prescott. When they arrived at the ranch at sundown, Townsend and Wright found things in an uproar. The Apaches whom they were trailing had raided the place late in the afternoon.

The Indians had attacked the livestock which was guarded by two herders. Killing herder John Gnatt in the process, the savages ran off 137 head of livestock. The other herder escaped with some of the horses to give the alarm. Expresses already had been sent both to Prescott and Camp Verde for assistance.

Agreeing to help the Bowers brothers try to recover their property, Townsend and Wright tended their horses and settled down for the night.

About 2:00 A. M. on June 6, eleven citizens arrived from Prescott in response to the expressman's appeal for volunteers. Just before daybreak five more Prescott men arrived. Of this group, thirteen of the names are recorded: C. "Jeff" Davis, L. Elliot, Charles B. Genung; J. E. Thomas, Thomas Redding, I. Barricklaw, R. Barricklaw, William Smith, N. P. Pierce, J. McCafferty, J. Cadder, J. Ryland and James Smith.

With three others from the ranch, there were twenty-one men ready to take the trail.

TOWNSEND was chosen Captain of the Citizen Company although included in the group were several other experienced Indian fighters, among them Davis, Genung and Ryland. But the unassuming half-Cherokee was their choice because his fanatical hatred of Indians was matched by his efficiency as a fighter.

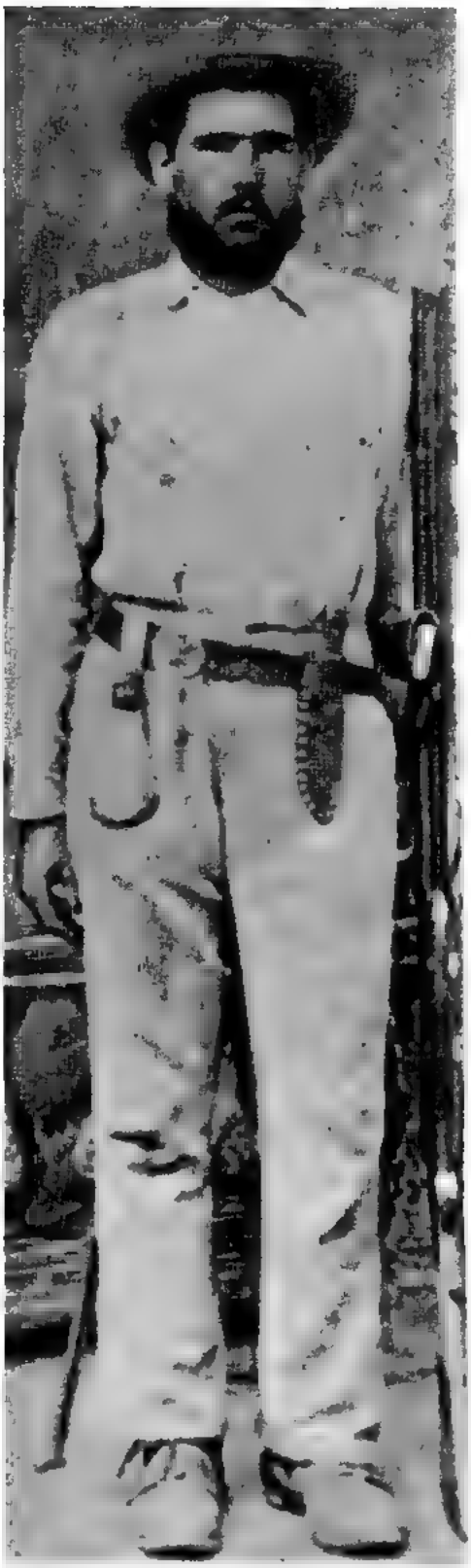
He also possessed the appeal of mystery. Recently employed as a scout by General Crook, for some reason he had been fired. Although neither Crook nor Townsend talked about their disagreement, the story persisted that Townsend had been sent on a lone scout to locate some hostiles. Crook had told him to report the location and strength of the Indians; Townsend had returned with the ears of fifteen savages instead of information. Hence he was alleged to have been dismissed for disobedience of orders. True or false, it was the sort of thing Townsend was likely to do.

Starting at daylight, the company followed the trail thirty-five miles east by south through mountainous country to the south side of what now is called Horner Mountain. On the trail the next morning, they met Second Lieutenant Charles Morton, A Troop, Third Cavalry, with thirty soldiers. Out of Camp Verde in response to the appeal of the second expressman, Morton also was in pursuit of the raiders of the Bowers ranch.

Joining forces, Lieutenant Morton took nominal overall command of the mixed group. He depended on the civilians to keep the trail of the savages. Townsend retained actual command of the Civilian Company. He relied on the soldiers to keep up and not spook the prey by making a lot of unnecessary noise. Soldiers and civilians followed the trail east twenty-five miles to the Verde River. Darkness catching them there, they camped for the night.

On June 8, they followed the tracks almost due east through rough, mountainous country. At 1:00 P. M. Townsend located an Apache rancheria in a small canyon beside a wall of rock a few miles south of present-day Pine, Arizona. The Apaches thought they had eluded their pursuers for they were feasting on several of Bowers' horses.

The white men attacked, killing twenty-three Indians; however, probably as many again escaped. The attack had been so skillfully executed that seven papooses were abandoned in the excitement. The white men found them in their Apache cradles propped beside the rock wall.



Courtesy Author

John B. Townsend

Did the sun in the cornfield ever reach into his heart? Not often. Townsend lived for the full of the moon. He was a farmer by day, a stalker by night

There was considerable discussion among the Civilian Company about the disposition of the Indian babies.

Townsend listened in until he sensed the majority were of the opinion they should be killed because "nits grow into lice."

Then he said, "All right boys, we'll shoot them. Let's draw straws to see who goes first."

When all had drawn, Townsend was found to have the short straw. He picked up a baby. Drawing his six-shooter, he cocked it slowly. As he prepared to shoot the Indian baby in the head, it smiled at him.

Standing the papoose against the wall, Townsend lowered the hammer of his gun. "Boys, I can't do it," he said. "We'll have to let them live."

The white men camped downstream from the rancheria. Before dark Ed Wright returned to the rancheria site and suspended the papooses on a rope between two trees. Next morning the babies were gone.

TOWNSEND found a trail which they followed southeast. It crossed the East Verde River then climbed into mountains covered with virgin yellow pines. At the divide between the East Verde and Tonto Creek another rancheria was found.

An attack was made which resulted in the deaths of thirty-one Indians and the recovery of one horse. Two other Bowers animals were killed by the Indians to prevent the White Eyes from getting possession of them. Also recovered was poor John Gnatt's six-shooter.

Running the surviving savages several miles, the trailers came in rifle range of three warriors riding two horses. Opening fire, they killed two Indians and wounded the third. Both horses, which were Bowers animals, were recovered unharmed. Here all trailing and fighting ended.

Having traveled about eighty-five miles in four days during which they had participated in two battles, both men and beasts were exhausted. Several horses were tenderfooted due to thrown shoes. Also, provisions were giving out.

The men admitted the country in which they found themselves was very beautiful and its climate was salubrious. However, no one in the command knew where they were. (The men were in the present Tonto Basin area.)

Then one of the soldiers, who had been on a previous scout in that part of the country, accidentally stumbled onto an old trail. From its general appearance and route the soldier reckoned it was the "Beckwith Trace." Made in 1849, this trail in former times had been a communication route between Fort Wingate, New Mexico, and Fort McDowell, Arizona. He claimed that by following the Trace south, they would find Fort McDowell.

Next morning, June 10, the men started south. At noon they arrived at Deer Creek which they followed downstream to Sycamore Creek. Continuing south in the general direction of the Sycamore, they reached Fort McDowell on the afternoon of June 12, 1871. There they rested two days.

When the Prescott contingent got home on June 18, a salute was fired in their honor because of the phenomenal success of the Townsend Expedition.

John Townsend and Ed Wright stopped at their homes before going on to Prescott. Townsend greeted Elizabeth and the children with undisguised affection, Ed wrote later. Especially he fussed over his daughter, Addie, who was about the age of the papoose he almost shot.

In Prescott on June 22 a Citizen's Committee presented John B. Townsend with a new Henry rifle and 1,000 rounds of ammunition. On either side of the rifle stock were silver plates two inches by three inches in size on which was inscribed:

Presented to
J. B. Townsend
By the Citizens of Prescott
June, 1871
HONOR TO THE BRAVE!

In making the presentation, the chairman expressed the earnest desire of all Prescott that Townsend would use his new weapon in the "reconstruction" of lots of Indians. An orator if the occasion called for it, Townsend responded with a short appropriate speech in which he promised to put into effect the desire of the people.

Also honored for their outstanding service to Prescott during the Townsend Expedition were Charles B. Genung, who was presented with a new Winchester, and C. (Jeff) Davis who received a Colt.

The Committee praised Lieutenant Morton for the tact, judgment and bravery shown in his first Indian fight. (The gentlemen didn't know he had entered West Point in 1865 after having fought in the Civil War for three years as a private. Therefore, the officer had more combat wisdom than most Second Lieutenants possess.)

The Federal Government also honored Morton for his gallantry on the Townsend Expedition by brevetting him a First Lieutenant. However, this honor wasn't conferred until 1890.

RETURNING to his home on the Aqua Fria, Townsend resumed his peculiar version of farming. By day he raised barley, corn and hay. By night (especially during full moons) he hunted marauding savages. He also helped out in any other Indian fights he heard of and could get to in time.

During the night of September 15, 1873, eight Apaches raided Townsend's corn field. He was furious for he hadn't even been aware of their presence.

Saddling his sorrel stallion, Jerry, he hurriedly collected jerky, canteen, coat, six-shooter and Henry rifle. Then he started in pursuit.

As he rode past the house he remarked to Elizabeth, "Don't go any farther than the fields."

Scattering, one savage had gone south along the Aqua Fria, another southeast toward Cave Creek. Townsend ignored both sets of tracks to follow an Indian who had trotted north up Black Canyon Creek. In five miles the Indian had neither left the creek nor been joined by other Indians.

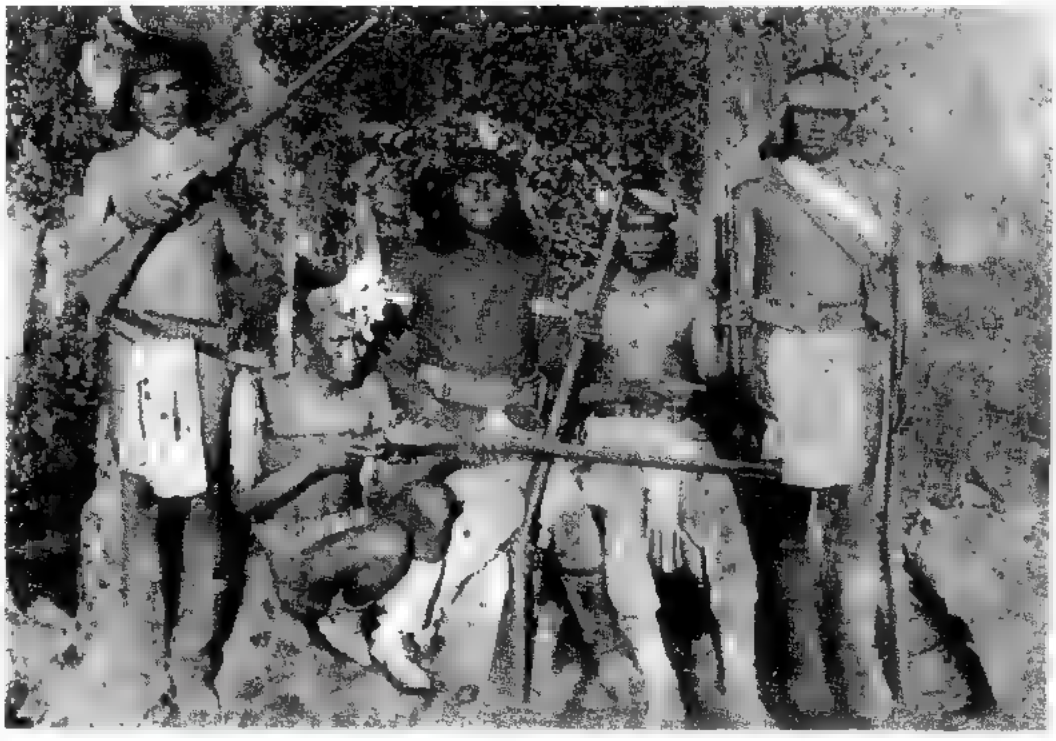
The tracker then turned southeast toward the juncture of Aqua Fria and Squaw Creek. Tracks showed that three Indians had headed up Squaw Creek (northeast) and two had traveled up the Aqua Fria.

Townsend tracked up Squaw Creek. After a few miles, sign indicated the Indians had rimmed out to the north.

(Continued on page 61)

A group of Tonto Apache scouts

Arizona Department of Library & Archives



Bell Street, as it appeared before the great fire of May, 1909

OLD TOWN

NARA VISA, New Mexico, was a town that grew down instead of up. It had the reputation of being the "Biggest Little Cowtown in New Mexico," then dwindled down to an "If you blink your eyes, you will miss it," sized place.

The railroad came through this territory in 1900. In 1904 there was only one fence between Clayton and Nara Visa to keep cattle from drifting. It was a seventy-mile strip. Nara Visa was set up as a water station. When the townsite was surveyed, it was done so by wagon wheel. The territory had been open for homesteading (160 acres) for some time but the big run began around 1906.

The Midland was the first large hotel to be built in Nara Visa. It was one of the first buildings to burn when fire gutted the business district.

Lots of people from everywhere came to file on claims. One such man, S. H. Fort, arrived in Nara Visa in 1906. He stayed at the Midland Hotel which was not completed and had blankets for windows and doors. Mr. Fort's first meal in town consisted of steak, potatoes, gravy, and dessert. It cost twenty-five cents.

He remembers when he caught typhoid fever and had to send to Dalhart for a doctor. The fee in those days was $25 a trip.

Mr. Fort owned and operated a butcher shop in Nara Visa, but only in the winter because he didn't need to install iceboxes to keep his meat. One time he witnessed a very amusing fight between two blacksmiths. They met at the railroad crossing, passed the time of day, then began arguing about who was the best blacksmith. The older man called the younger man a bad name and the young man said, "I respect old age but no one is going to call me a s-o-b!" and promptly swung at the old man with all his youthful might. The old man weaved a little and doubled up his fist and knocked the young man down. The young man bounced up and swung again. The old man blocked his punch and knocked him down again. And again. Three times it took to teach the young man to really respect old age—and other blacksmiths!

In 1908 and 1909 there were eight saloons in Nara Visa. XIT and Bravo cowboys visited them regularly. There weren't very many fights over saloon girls because there weren't very many saloon girls. The ratio was ten men to one girl. There were sometimes as many as three dances going on at the same time. Nara Visa was famous for its old-time dances. There was even a Barber Shop Quartet, and S. H. Fort was a member.

The town had two newspapers. A copy of the *New Mexican* published in July, 1908 was found recently in the Rock Island depot by Guy Henley. One of the more interesting items concerned a boar hog selling for $5,000.00. That must have been some hog!

Nara Visa had its share of bank robberies—seven in all. The first occurred in the '20s when a horseman rode boldly up to the bank, walked in, and told the teller, Mrs. Blanche Watts, to hand over the money and keep her mouth shut or else. When he left, he knocked her out with the butt of his pistol, and took off toward Texas. The latest bank robbery was in 1953. Not long after, the bank was sold and Nara Visa has none today.

In the bank building is a "Gunsmoke" type saloon. Instead of money in the vault, whiskey and beer are stored there. Ima Ward, "Miss Kitty" as she is often called, is the owner. The bar-bank building is lined with antiques and bottles. May Jones, Miss Kitty's sister, owns 5,000 pounds or more of old bottles. The bar and "Bottle Wranglers Headquarters" are becoming landmarks.

Nara Visa once had two doctors. Their offices were over Murphy's Drugstore. Cowboys had to check their guns at Murphy's. Hugo Loerenstern told me of one funny Halloween trick he and some of his friends pulled when they were young boys. They uprooted a pig pen and put it, pigs and all, right smack in front of Murphy's Drugstore. "Boy, was he mad!" Mr. Loerenstern says.

OF ALL the good and bad memories, the old-timers remember the most vividly a terrible night in May, 1909. The town had boomed for several years and suddenly eighteen thriving businesses were

In some ways the town was like a horse caught in quicksand; the harder it struggled, the deeper it sank . . .

By UNASUE SELLERS WRIGHT

Photos Courtesy Dorothea. Burns

King Hotel, across from the depot, was very deluxe when this picture was made in 1908.

Nara Visa

destroyed in less than half a day in a monstrous fire.

An account of it reads, "Only a mass of twisted iron and tin is left where the day before stood the busiest section of our little city.

"The fire was first discovered about 12:10 a.m. Reports are conflicting as to where the fire started. Nightwatchman Henry Potter, who was employed to watch the Howell store, claims the fire started between the Cisco Drugstore and the Howell store. Others who were early at the scene of the fire say the fire started in the Howell store and that the flames were leaping several feet from the eaves of the Howell building before the Cisco building had caught.

"Frank C. Leyhe, Hugo Loerenstern, John Waterfill and two other men were sleeping in the Egbery Building, above the Cisco Drugstore, and they were the first to give the general alarm. They were awakened by the smoke and saved nothing from the rooms in which they were sleeping.

"From the first it was seen that the entire half block on the south side of the street was doomed and all energies were applied to save adjoining property. Within twenty minutes from the time the fire was discovered, the flames had leaped across Bell Street, near the center of the block, and within a very few minutes the whole north side of Bell Street was also doomed.

"By good work and a change of the wind the fire was confined to this part of the block, and by 2:00 o'clock the fire fighters felt they had it under control.

"The buildings in the burned area were all of wood—some being covered with sheet-iron, but all burned like dry powder. The heat was so intense and the flames traveled from one building to another so rapidly that very little stock was saved from any of the buildings. Trunks and personal belongings were all that were saved from the Midland Hotel. Quite a large amount of 'good cheer' was saved from Smith & Hixinbaugh's Saloon —that is, it was saved from the flames, but was consumed in putting out the raging fires in the throats of the workers and others.

"The Gem Restaurant saved the coffee urn. The *Mexican* office saved their

(Continued on page 63)

A bird's-eye view of Nara Visa in 1908 when it boasted forty-five thriving business establishments. The railroad depot in the foreground still stands.

Willow Groves Hotel in El Monte where The Monte Boys often gathered following a lynching. Built by Ira Thompson (right), it also served as a stage depot. Thompson and five other men organized the band of tough vigilantes known as The Monte Boys.

By JOSEPH KENNELLEY

Photos Courtesy Lillian Wiggins
El Monte Historical Society

THE SHOOTING, the robbing, the wanton killing hadn't begun yet. Camp El Monte was peaceful and serene back in 1851. After all, there were only five families living there—in little one-room, willow-and-mud adobe houses. Occasionally a family of Mexicans or Indians, sometimes gypsies, would pass through on their way to Mexico from settlements in northern or central California.

The area was swampy, with lush green willows growing among a mass of watercress and patches of wild grapes. Many huge alders grew along the banks of the San Gabriel River which brought water from the melting snows of the Sierra Madre. Located about twenty-one miles from the center of Los Angeles, then just an infant city, "The Monte" (as it was called then) was like a small paradise tucked away in a land of rugged terrain. Just a few miles to the east were the drifting sands of the Cucamonga Desert and southwest, inland a short distance from the Pacific shores, lay barren clayish earth.

Nobody living in The Monte then—or anyone passing through—could imagine that within five years this little camp would be a bustling, noisy town with a cruel lawlessness that California had never before witnessed.

The Monte was the end of the Santa Fe Trail. Forty miles eastward the Mormons had founded the town of San Bernardino. For over four years a couple of pioneer ranchers, John Rowland and Bill Workman, had operated their cattle ranches not far away in the Puente Valley, on land granted them by Pio Pico, the last Mexican Governor of California, when he divided up the vast mission lands around Los Angeles.

IN 1850 a company of forty-five covered wagons, drawn by ox teams, had set out for California from Independence, Missouri. It was called the Oatman Party. The captain of the wagon train was Royse Oatman. By November, four of the families in this party had arrived at Camp El Monte; the Oatmans, except for the two youngest daughters, were ambushed and massacred by Apaches. They and others had diverted onto other trails, some settling elsewhere on their way to California. The two girls became the prize catch of some of the braves. Olive Oatman, aged ten at the time of her abduction, was discovered many years later in Fort Yuma as the runaway wife of an Apache who had mistreated her and their two children.

Rain was coming down steadily in The Monte when husky Ira Thompson pulled his wagon into the yard of John Rowland's ranch house in Puente.

He had brought his family all the way from Lexington, Kentucky, traveling eleven months. Rowland fed the family, gave them some flour and beef, and told them about the best spot to camp on, over in The Monte. Nothing there but dampness, he warned, and advised them where they could find the strongest willows for making shelter.

When Thompson reached The Monte he found that a couple of days before, four families had arrived. Nick Schmidt had driven his oxen out from Kentucky. Grant Cuddeback had brought his family from Tennessee, with young Ed Norton and the Fielding Gibson family following close behind.

Willow-and-mud houses went up fast. Each family pitched in to help the other get a roof over the heads of the womenfolk and children. Food wasn't scarce. Many cattle roamed the country around The Monte, some wild. Fencing in livestock hadn't yet begun. Meat was plentiful.

By early 1851 a few more families brought their wagons into The Monte. Young and hardy boys in their teens and early twenties formed work parties, the women keeping them fueled on hot beef soup and fresh-baked bread. The young men put up homes, corrals, barns, a school, and began turning soil for planting. Swamps were drained, and low areas filled with dirt and stones hauled from hills that lay westward toward Los Angeles. The soil was rich and fertile. Vegetables seemed to spring from the earth, and grew abundantly. No member of this energetic little camp ever felt the pangs of hunger!

VENGEANCE RIDERS of The Monte

Unique among vigilante groups—for when the need was over, they put the gun on the mantel and the horses in the barn for good . . .

New arrivals continued to pull into The Monte. One family, the Sam Heaths, brought boxes full of seeds. Apple trees were set out and thrived.

The following year several more families made The Monte their new home. A Captain Johnson, commanding a small wagontrain, arrived. Obed Macey, a doctor, and Mrs. Macey came out with the James Sheldon family from Texas. Then came the Johnny Corbin family, Charlotte Gray and her three children, schoolteacher Miss Mary Agnes, Dr. Mayes, Tom Wiggins, Charlie Cunningham, Dr. Whistler, Ed Tyler and family, Nat Vise and children, young John Guess and Silas Bennett.

Jake Weil and Bill Lee followed in early 1853. Others joined them. Suddenly old Ira Thompson looked around and found a real town thriving on what had been desolate swamplands just three years before.

Stores and a blacksmith shop—and a saloon—were built. A dusty main road seemed to form, a road along which wooden houses began to go up beside stores and stables. (Lumber hauling was more common now, coming in from the Port of San Pedro nearly fifty miles away.)

BUT AS The Monte grew, so did crime. The peace and contentment these struggling settlers enjoyed for four years suddenly ended. In 1855 lawlessness reigned, and occasional raids by Indians of the Mojave Desert added to the town's woes. On one such raid a large band swept down on a lone rancher a few miles from The Monte, murdering him and his whole family, and burning his home. They stole the rancher's livestock and everything else of value before a counter-attack by the settlers could be made.

Crime right in The Monte itself was getting completely out of hand. Folks saw an ever increasing number of caravans using The Monte as a camping site on their way to the gold fields. Caravans from the East arrived and departed; stages began running from Los Angeles to San Bernardino and used The Monte as a stopping place. And the Pony Express came through.

Along with this "progress," the building of saloons increased. Gambling places opened; shootings multiplied; and even horse racing down dusty Main Street became an important Sunday event.

Night life—according to stories handed down to present-day grandchildren of these settlers—was not only exciting, it was downright dangerous. It seemed that all the bad characters who had been driven out of mining towns took refuge in Los Angeles, many of them coming out to The Monte where there was apparently plenty of liquor, plenty of pretty girls, and all kinds of ways to get into trouble!

On the other hand, all the outlaws of the Mexican frontier made for the California gold mines, and the cutthroats of both California and Mexico naturally met in the vicinity of Los Angeles. The Monte seemed to get the biggest share.

Knives and six-shooters settled differences—real or imaginary. Sheriffs and marshals were killed at pleasure. Thieving and robbing were rampant. Everywhere desperadoes defied the law.

There is documentary proof that at one time the job of sheriff, then paying the staggering salary of $10,000 per year, went vacant. No one could be found bold enough to accept the office. The two former sheriffs had been assassinated within the brief space of eleven months.

The Monte, the first real English-speaking community in California, now began to earn nicknames for itself. In many towns back East this rough little community was called The Hell-hole. Other towns referred to it as Lick Skillet. Many citizens in nearby Los Angeles delighted in calling it Pokerville when discussing that "damn little town out on the San Gabriel River."

What a reputation! Even cattle rustlers from as far away as Texas made their appearance to prey upon this small rowdy settlement.

LAW enforcement was needed and it was needed badly. Los Angeles had already organized a group of vigilantes calling themselves the Rangers. Their "Major" was one Horace Bell, who later wrote a book on California's history.

Old Ira Thompson made up his mind that some rough action was needed in The Monte, needed at once! He saddled up and rode over to Captain Johnson's place, now the town blacksmith. They talked awhile. Then he headed for Tom Wiggins' home. Wiggins joined him to ride over to Nat Vise's place. Nat sent his son to summon Bill Turner and Grant Cuddeback.

Within two days, twelve more determined men had joined Thompson and the others. The vigilantes, soon to become widely known as The Monte Boys, were organized. They were ready to ride!

There are no records available indicating the man chosen as their leader. It may have been Thompson. However, some descendants of Captain Johnson and Grant Cuddeback claim that their ancestors organized and led the group.

The Monte Boys first met in front of

(Continued on page 53)

Old El Monte jail still stands. Its original location was barely 100 yards from a livery stable where three outlaws were all hanged at the same time.

The Grudgings tombstone

MONUMENT TO HATE

COLD AND BITTER WORDS ARE CARVED INTO THIS STONE—PUT THERE FOR ALL THE WORLD TO SEE

By EDITHA L. WATSON

Photos Courtesy Gila National Forest Service

AWAY OUT on the West Fork of the Gila River, in southwestern New Mexico, stands a marble tombstone. It is not in a graveyard, but stands alone and lonely near a crumbling cabin under a big old alligator-bark juniper tree. There are many other graves "out on the Gila," as local people know the area—graves of good men and bad, of women and children too—but if they are recognizable at all it is because of the stones piled over them to discourage wolves. So this unusual marker calls attention as abruptly as a burst of gunfire. And if such a thing in such a place is not sufficiently strange, the inscription on the stone is even stranger:

WILLIAM
GRUDGINGS
WAYLAYED AND
MURDERED
BY
TOM WOOD
OCT. 8, 1893
AGE
37
YEARS, 8 MONTHS

What is the story behind this monument to hate? Talks with old-timers, a visit to the Gila Forest Service headquarters, an account by the late Henry Woodrow, former District Ranger for the Gila National Forest, and the yellowing files of the Silver City, New Mexico *Enterprise* have provided the details of a feud brought to a grim conclusion far from the Southwest.

THE GRUDGINGS BROTHERS, Bill and Tom, were ranchers on the West Fork of the Gila above what is now the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument. Thomas J. Wood had a ranch at the mouth of Clayton Creek on the Middle Fork of the river. Wood had come west as a young man and had served as a peace officer and with the Texas Rangers before he settled down to ranching. "Uncle Fred" Ramsay of Silver City remembers seeing him when Ramsay was a very young man, and relates that he could roll a cigarette with one hand so fast that the eye could not follow. Wood was a sure shot, and before he died had fourteen notches on his gun, accounting for fourteen killings. As a lawman, albeit one who took little notice of the red tape of legal procedure, he doubtless considered all of these deaths justifiable, needful and proper. When he saw the necessity to kill he had no scruples. Yet it is doubtful if he ever shot without the conviction that it was necessary.

He was married to a Mexican woman, and had a boy of fifteen, Charley, around whom he centered all his pride and affection. Another child had died while small, and was buried near the Wood ranch house.

His feud with the Grudgings began, Wood told Henry Woodrow, when he found out about their cattle rustling activities. He warned them to stop but, as they had no intention of doing so, he felt sure that they planned to kill him before he could expose them. All they needed was an opportunity, and their chance might have come in time if one of those odd quirks of fate that sometimes happen had not changed everything by bringing a stranger into the picture.

Late in September, 1892, Wood was hewing logs for a barn when a stranger came into camp, lost and hungry. The man was not unlike Wood in appearance, being of about the same build and with a similar dark beard. He gave his name as Francisco Diaz, and after being fed he turned to and helped Wood with his work, returning to the ranch house with him when they finished.

What Diaz was doing up there in that wild country is a mystery. He talked little about himself, but his story evi-

The graves of the Wood children were near the family ranch house.

dently satisfied the Woods. He particularly interested them when he told them that he was a blanket-weaver by trade. Mrs. Wood mentioned that they needed blankets at the ranch, and Wood offered to pay for the necessary materials if Diaz would set up a loom and do some weaving.

The loom did not take long to make, but it was necessary to bring wool from Silver City before the weaving could commence. Wood decided that it would be better to send Diaz in with Charley instead of going himself as he was accustomed to doing, so that Diaz could buy the materials for his blanket-weaving while Charley bought the usual supplies for the ranch.

This took only a few days, and on October 10 the two started back for the ranch with five burros loaded with their purchases. The trip through the Gila Forest, fording the Sapillo and Gila Rivers and traveling up and down steep trails, was a slow one behind burros with heavy packs, and usually took the better part of two days. Diaz and the boy camped that evening a few miles past the Grudgings' cabin, at the mouth of Double E Canyon near the steep "Zigzag" trail that cut over to the Middle Fork. Charley put on his night clothes, but Diaz, following the custom of the country, slept in his underwear.

It was a dark night, but there was enough starlight to see by. The burros pointed their ears at two shadows moving quietly closer, and laid them back at two quick, sharp sounds, but the shadows moved away and the burros resumed their slumber.

The next morning C. E. Milliken, riding past on the lookout for cattle, saw the camp and rode over to it, thinking that the two had overslept. To his horror he discovered that both had been shot in the head, and the boy had also been beaten about the head and shot in the hand. Milliken hurried on to spread the news.

A CORONER'S jury of cowboys from nearby ranches was assembled the next day (October 12), but they could find nothing in the way of clues. It had rained the night of the murder, and all tracks were obliterated. Nothing had been molested or was missing. The burros were found nearby, the guns were leaned against a tree, and packs lay where they had been piled on the ground. The cowboy jury came to the obvious conclusion that the murders had been committed "at the hands of parties unknown." William Grudgings was one of those who served on that coroner's jury.

Diaz was buried where he fell. One place was as good as another for the luckless stranger who unknowingly had given his life for that of the man who befriended him. But Tom Wood, ice in his veins, tenderly rolled the body of his young son into the blankets of his last long sleep, loaded it on his horse, and took it home to the ranch, where it could rest beside the other child.

There were no children now. Tom and his wife fell to their knees and prayed and wept over their son, murdered without warning and without reason. Tom Wood loved his son. They had been companions on the trail and the hunt ever since the youngster had been old enough to go along. He was a dependable boy, not likely to get into fights or cause enmities.

On October 20 Wood rode into Silver City and gave the story to the newspaper. At that time he was quoted as saying that the murder must have been committed by someone who had a grudge against Diaz, had slain him and then killed Charley to keep him from telling who did it.

Surely he did not believe his own story, but told it to cover up his convictions. At a distance Wood and Diaz resembled each other, and it is doubtful if anyone knew that Diaz had ever come to the Wood ranch. No one in the area knew that Diaz, and not Wood himself, was sleeping in camp that night, but the Grudgings brothers might have watched from their cabin across the river and thought that the bearded man was Wood. They knew where camp would likely be made, and after dark it would be easy to sneak up and make an end, as they thought, of both men of the Wood family. Yes, Tom knew without doubt the names of the shadows who had crept close to destroy his boy's life.

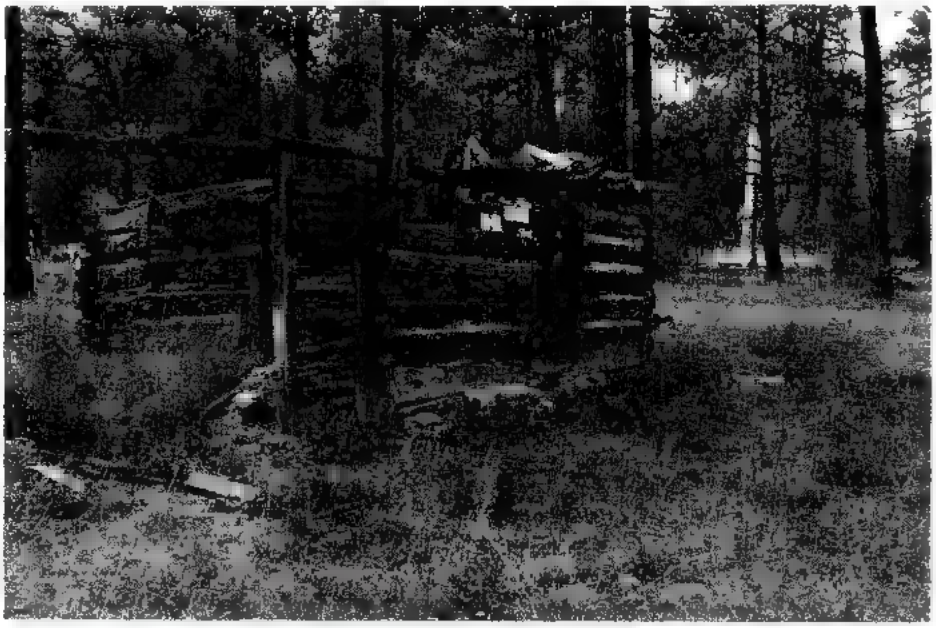
ACCORDING to the old Southwestern code of honor, there was only one thing for him to do. Knowing the slowness and uncertainty of a legal trial, the notches on his gun reminded him of other occasions when he had represented both the law and the penalty. This was not just another killing—it was murder, his son's murder, and it demanded vengeance. If he thought of Diaz at all, it only added fuel to the fire. So it was that Wood made open threats, before long, to kill the Grudgings on sight. If there had been anyone to take over his ranch duties he might have gone gunning for them then. He had to stick pretty closely to the place, and the brothers managed to avoid him for nearly a year. But as the anniversary of Charley's murder neared, vengeance must have blazed in his heart with a cold flame.

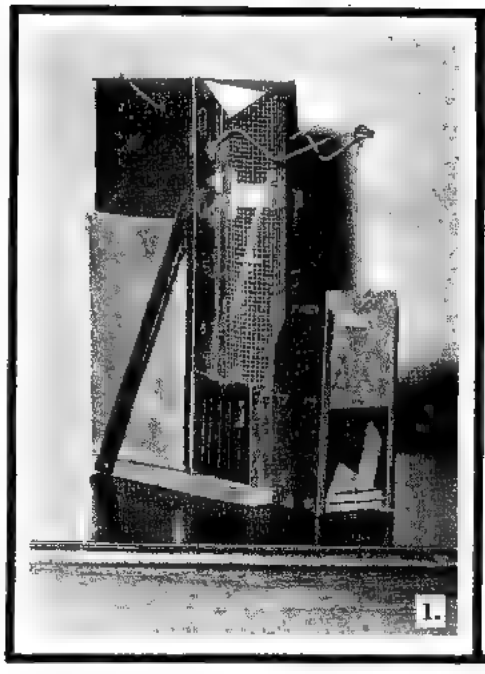
He shot and killed William Grudgings on October 8, 1893, just two days before the year was over.

There are several versions of this killing. One is that Wood called Grudgings

(Continued on page 56)

Remains of the Grudgings cabin





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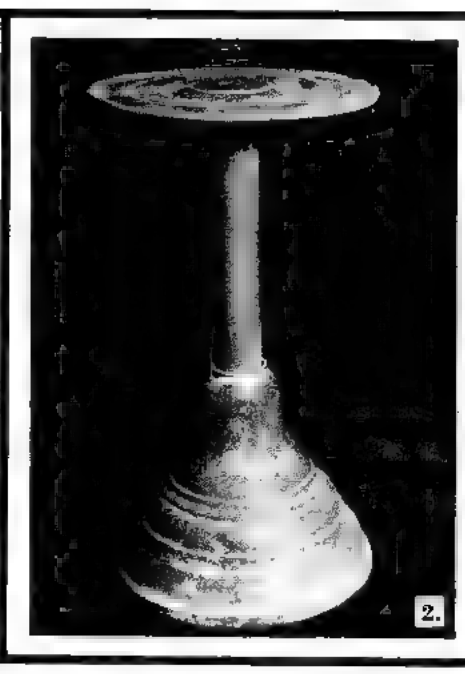

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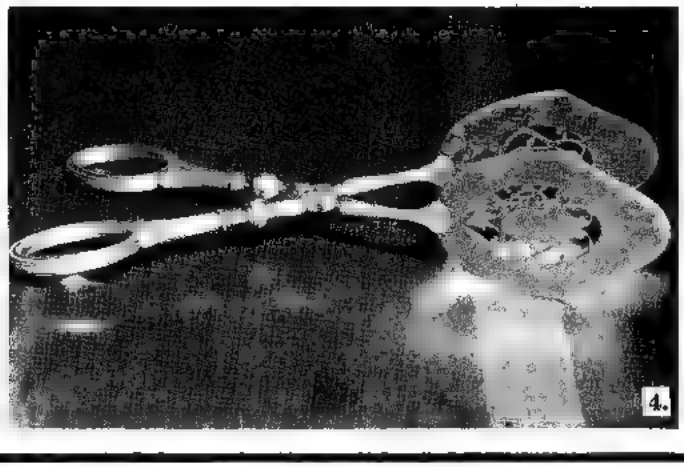
So You Think You Know The West?

By JOHN R. CLAWSON

HERE is another quiz about items that were commonly used, or commonly made, in the early days of the American West. One old-timer used to say, "Most of what we had, we made. What we couldn't make, we borried. What we couldn't borrey, we bought. But we made more than we borried, and we borried more than we bought. What we bought we had to pay for in them days."

In spite of that old-timer's description of the times, merchandising was often thriving and the store-boughten goods were welcome. Only because distances into town were frequently long and hardships of the trip demanding was nearly every settler called upon to tax his inventiveness to the utmost.

About half the articles here were made at home, and the other half, available in stores. The homemade goods were usually similar—as though a common-law patent had been used in a thousand-mile production line that spanned prairie, desert and mountain. A few of the items pictured may be so obvious that they can be recognized immediately. They are included because of their ingenuity. Others are more difficult to recognize. Go through the list and see how many objects you can identify. Then turn to page 72 for the correct answers.



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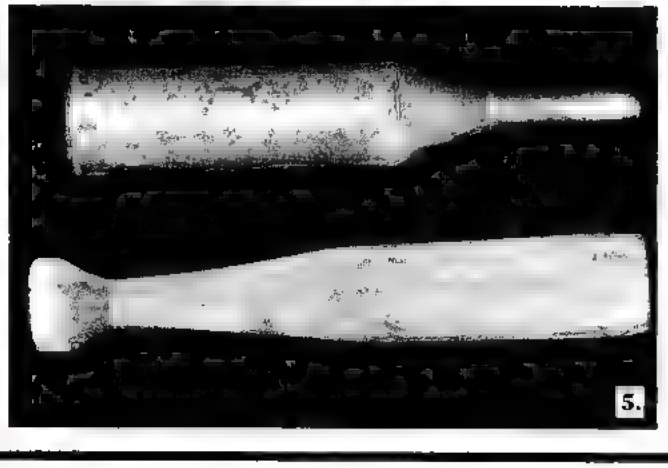

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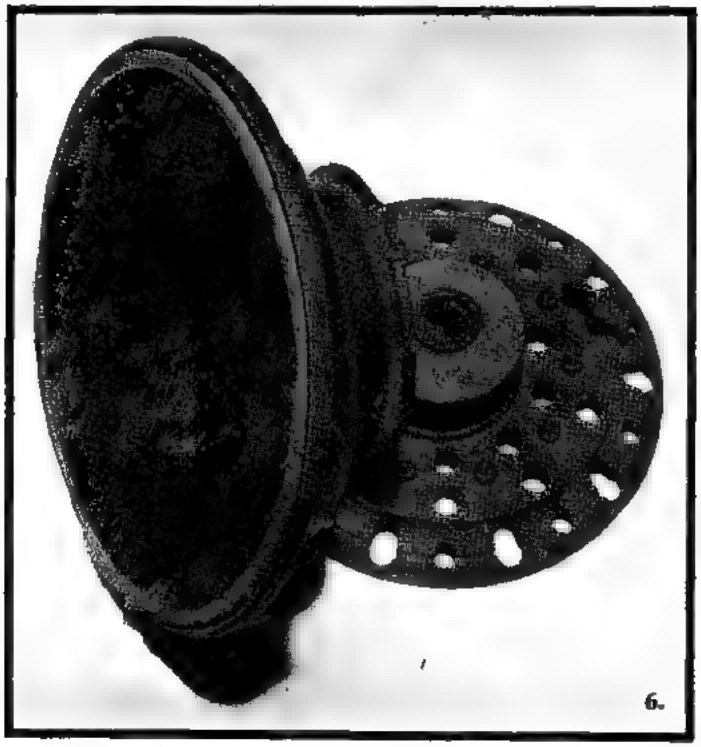

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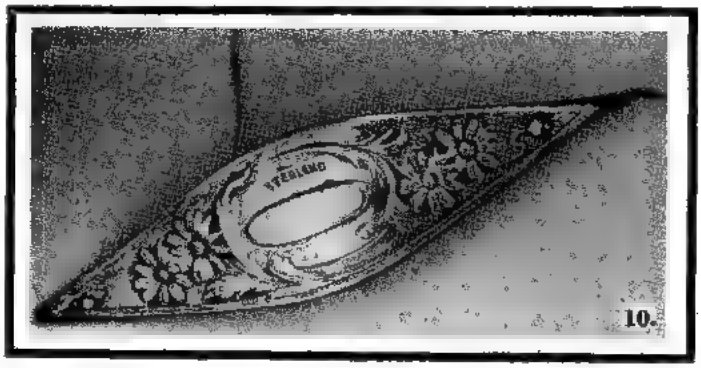

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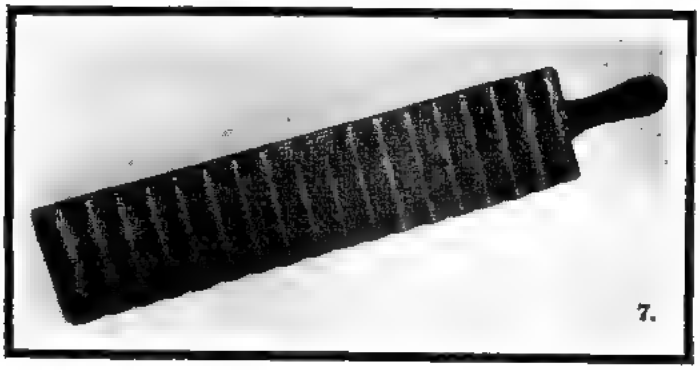

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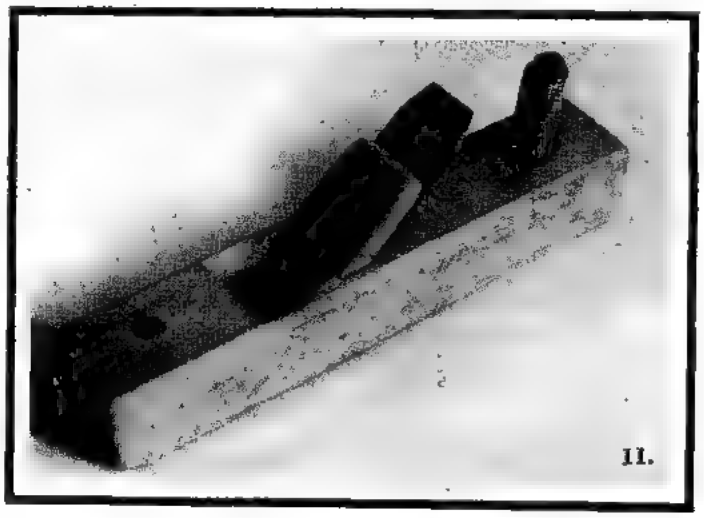

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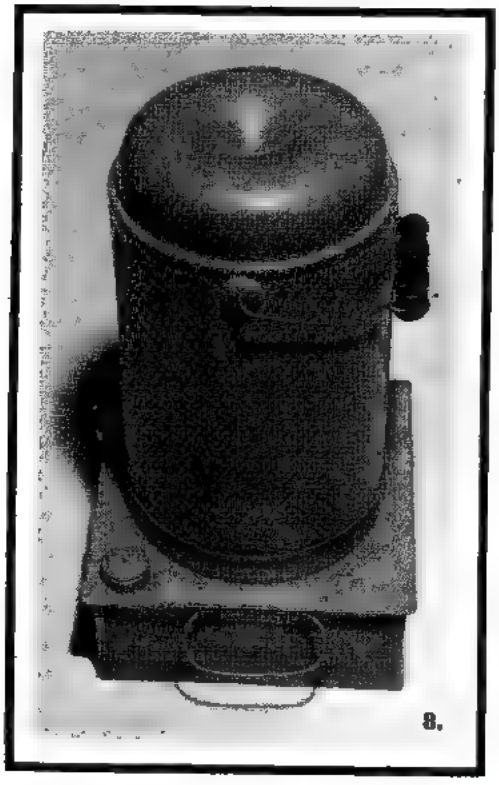

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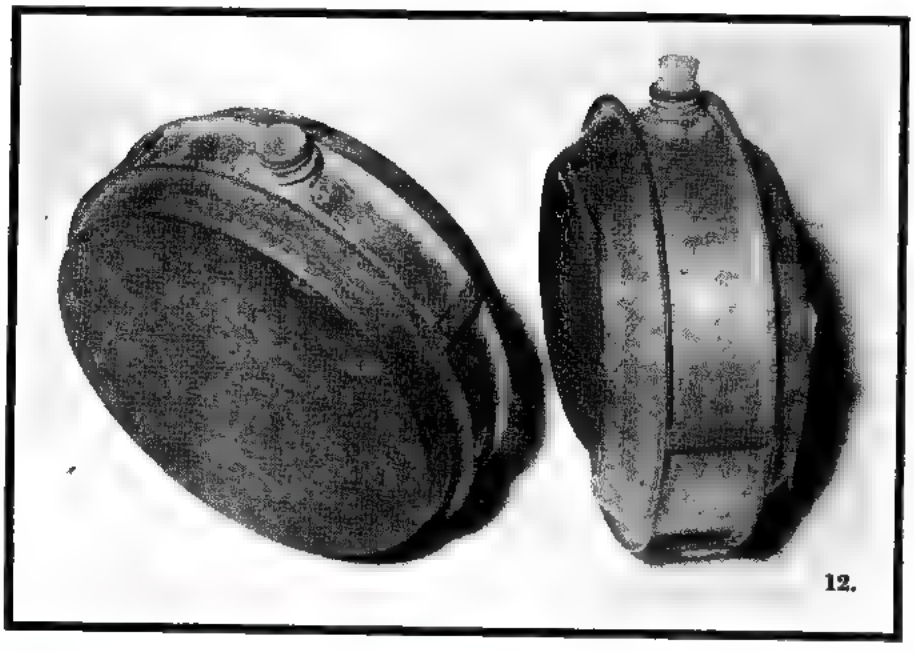

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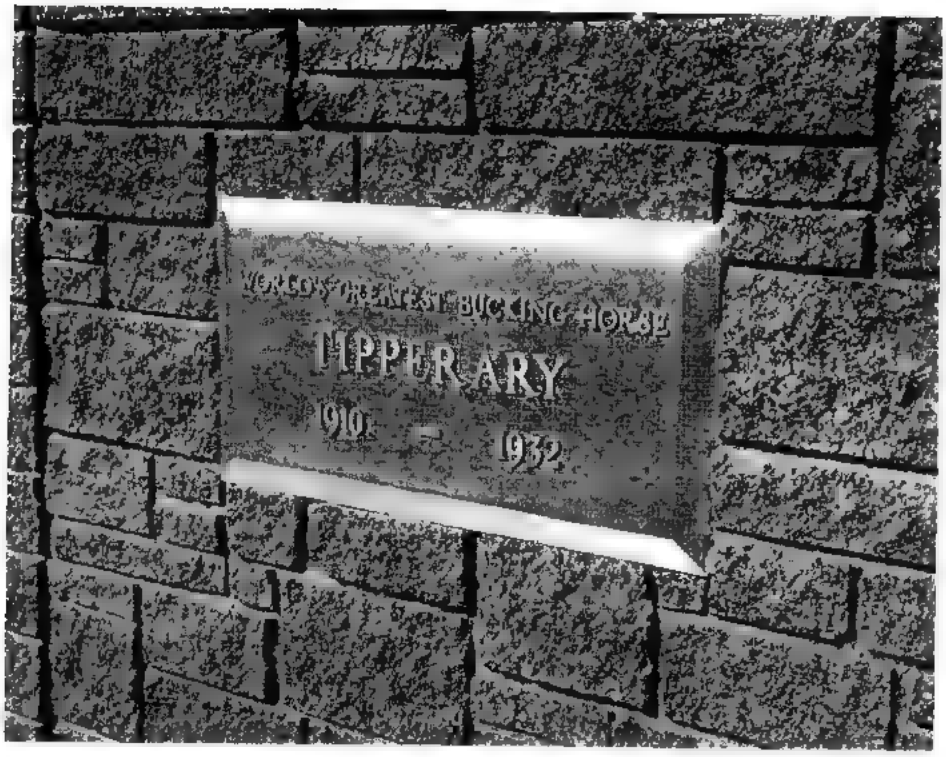
Wild Old Days!



Courtesy Jim Kuehn—Rapid City Daily Journal

Monument to one of the great ones

BUFFALO'S GREATEST

By Ed Niciejewski

THE BONES of Tipperary, the world's most famous bucking horse rest in a grave on the outskirts of Buffalo, his home range. Like the bones of Sitting Bull, Tipperary's rest in an eight-square concrete block—just in case some other town gets an idea the remains belong to it.

Buffalo residents aren't saying which town this might be, but it's well known the famous bucking horse gained fame and did most of his bucking at the Tri-State Roundup in Belle Fourche between 1915 and 1928.

Tipperary is a magic name to old-timers in the West River area. At mention of the word, a reverent tone creeps into their voices and memory clouds their eyes. The comment is: "Now there was a horse!"

Some maintain he was never ridden according to the rules. "There wasn't a man who could ride that horse and I never knew of one who qualified," said one old-timer. "There were world champion cowboys trying, too," he added.

Paul Peterson, manager of the Buffalo Commercial Club said two persons qualified on Tipperary during his thirteen-year bucking career. They were Yakima Canutt, world champion cowboy who later starred in western movies, and Harold Ekberg, a Buffalo cowboy.

Carl Quarnberg of Rapid City, a member of the Belle Fourche rodeo committee during the heyday of Tipperary, said, "I'll say he was a horse; he was really something. I've never seen him ridden and I don't know of anybody who ever qualified on him," Quarnberg said. "During the first Roundup at Belle Fourche, a Red Cross benefit, they got a man by the name of Sam Brownell, who was champion cowboy at Cheyenne, Wyoming, to ride Tipperary.

"You could have thrown a hat between Sam and the horse—he was lucky enough to land back in the saddle for ten seconds but it wasn't a qualifying ride," Quarnberg said.

Mrs. Dollie Dippert of Rapid City, described Tipperary as a deep bay horse with black legs and the lines of a race horse. "He was a beautiful horse, so proud," Mrs. Dippert said. "Every time he came out, the band would play *Tipperary* while they led him around the track. He seemed to dance to the music with his head held high. He didn't act too bad until a rider tried to get on him."

Mrs. Dippert saw Tipperary often. Born in Bison in 1893, she was a daughter of the first white family to settle in that area. As a girl she went to rodeos and saw the famous bucking horse. Mrs. Dippert said he had a different "twist" in bucking. "He would go up and twist —when the rider went off, he would go off in back of the horse. Tipperary would just leave him up in the air," Mrs. Dippert said.

She remembered three persons who stayed with the bronc for the full ten seconds, but only one made a qualified ride—Canutt.

Fritz Kensler of Buffalo stayed with him for the full time, but it wasn't a good ride. Babe Mansbridge, the champion cowboy of British Columbia, also lasted for the time, but lost a stirrup, she said.

Born an outlaw, Tipperary went through several ownerships before attempts to make the horse a saddler failed and Charles Wilson bought him. Wilson used him in rodeos until old age forced retirement.

Tipperary died on his home range during a blizzard in 1932. Over twenty years later Claude Olson and Art Ritchie went to the "jumpoff" range about fifteen miles northwest of Buffalo and gathered the bones for interment. Several ranchers had located the remains before decomposition, and positive identification was made by a split front hoof.

The large Haydite monument constructed by Dr. Ray Lemley of Rapid City was unveiled in 1957. A bronze plaque on the monument has a simple message: "World's Greatest Bucking Horse, TIPPERARY, 1910-1932.

The monument has special significance to Dr. Lemley. His father, Pete Lemley, one of the oldest-timers in the area, frequently judged Tipperary's riders.—Courtesy *Rapid City Daily Journal*, Rapid City, South Dakota.

LINCOLN TROTTING WOLF

By Charlotte M. Cox

BORN IN Indian Territory near what is now Chelsea, Oklahoma, March 15, 1865, Lincoln Trotting Wolf was named for the President of the United States, who was assassinated that year.

A full-blooded Cherokee Indian, Trotting Wolf explained that his father's name was Trotting Wolf Ooojostisa. He said his father's last name was dropped when the children were put on the Cherokee roll. Both his father and mother were from North Carolina.

Trotting Wolf is alert and friendly. He lives in the Old Piney Community on Beaty's Creek, seven miles southeast of Jay, in Delaware County. The county was a part of the old Cherokee Nation, with Tahlequah as its capital.

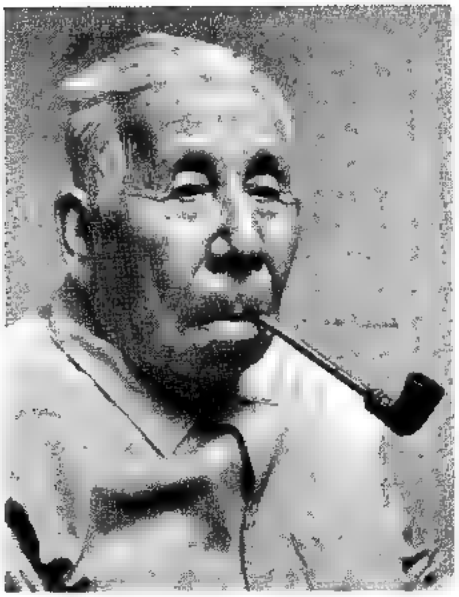
Trotting Wolf smokes a long-stemmed clay pipe he has used seventy years. Each outer side of the pipe is hollowed out where "I dipped it in the fireplace for a coal of fire for a light."

The 100-year-old Indian is the picture of health. His face is unlined. He has his own teeth, doesn't wear eye glasses, eats anything he wants, and does all kind of work, according to his pretty, young-appearing wife, Gracie.

"I don't have to go to doctors," he smiled, "and if I have a toothache, I cure it myself. I just take a teaspoon full of coal oil, rinse it around in my mouth and the toothache is gone."

He speaks English well, but lapses into the Cherokee language when conversing with Gracie.

With keen memory Trotting Wolf recalls childhood days near the Chelsea area. "My father made and used a wooden plow" he said. As a lad, Lincoln Trotting Wolf did farm work and cared for stock at the McSpadden Farm near Chelsea. He moved to predominantly Cherokee-populated Delaware County in 1930.



Courtesy Author

Lincoln Trotting Wolf

"He has been a prominent stone mason, and could probably do the work yet," grinned Maj. Gen. Lee Washbourne (Retired) recalling Trotting Wolf's making the chimney for his father's old home on Brush Creek, south of Jay.

Le Albro, Delaware County deputy sheriff, said of Trotting Wolf, "He has been an old man ever since I've known him."

BELOVED by the paleface population, as well as his own tribe, Trotting Wolf was honored with a day-long celebration on the Sunday before his 100th birthday in March. It was held at the Old Piney Indian Baptist Church. Trotting Wolf had fattened a hog which was cooked "Hog Fry, Cherokee Style" in huge iron wash pots, and served on long tables in the old church yard. Trotting Wolf attends the church services at the Piney church, where his brother-in-law, Rev. Sam Hyder, is pastor.

His three living children are Nelson Trotting Wolf of Bartlesville, Ed Trotting Wolf of Ochelata, and Sequoyah Trotting Wolf of Oklahoma City.

The beautiful pine-clad Spavinaw Hills must have a peacefulness that makes for longevity.

Lincoln Trotting Wolf looks as if he is good for many years to come. On the day I interviewed him, he was working at carpentry in the kitchen and getting ready to help a neighbor saw wood for fuel.

THE DISAPPEARING MOUNTIE

By Helen Marquis

IT WAS April 6, 1885, when a band of Indians under the leadership of Big Bear murdered, pillaged and burned the little settlement of Frog Lake in what is now the northern part of Alberta, Canada. The war-paint lay still thick on their faces; the blood-lust still ran hot in their veins. Now they were on their way to commit further depredations across the line in Saskatchewan at Fort Pitt.

As was usual, one scout had been sent on in advance to see that the path lay clear of ambush, but the frenzy at Frog Lake had not yet burned low enough to produce his usual caution. He did not know that he was not alone until two hands about his mouth throttled his warning cries, and a body pressed him to immobility. It was only then he saw his assailants—the North West Mounted Police. They were out on reconnaisance duty, and seeing a native in full warpaint and taking him for what he was, had used this unorthodox method of accosting him. Dressed in their dull brown forage uniforms, they had been able to slip up on him unawares.

The Indian scout, when allowed to speak, maintained that he was on a peaceful mission; he had merely been out scouting for game.

"My brother hunts for meat in warpaint?" queried the Mountie.

The Indian fell silent, but not for long. Under insistent questioning, the Indian finally admitted his undertaking. No sooner had he spoken than the policemen ran to their concealed horses and were away to warn the fort. But the advance body of the Indian party was not far behind, and almost at once was in swift pursuit.

ARMED with captured guns and ammunition, the Indians had a longer shooting range than when armed with bows and arrows. Constable Cowan was killed at once, and Constable Loasby's horse was shot from under him. As it fell to its knees, Loasby leaped from the saddle and raced for the fort. The sounds of gunfire had brought the rest of the Force to the gate, and it was opened wide. As Loasby reached it, a bullet found its mark in his back. Rescuing hands caught his falling body and he was dragged inside.

The third policeman, whose name is unknown, having lost his horse to the Indian fire and seeing he had no chance of reaching the fort, made a mad dash for the river, a quarter of a mile distant. In Saskatchewan, ice stays in the rivers until late spring. At Fort Pitt, a narrow channel had opened in the center, and the dark, icy waters were running swiftly. The river ice on either side of the channel lay under several inches of water. The current underneath was swift, and the whole surface of the ice had an almost imperceptible movement like the slow throb of an artery. It would not only be dangerous, but impossible, to cross. Even if the ice held to the center, and the fleeing man attempted to swim the open channel, its icy temperature meant sure death after a minute or two.

With the Indians in close pursuit, the Mountie had little chance to escape. Then he saw a way out. The riverbank, like so many others, had been eroded by the constant washing of the waves and further scooped out by huge cakes of ice that were pushed against it in the spring break-up. A wide shelf of soil, held there by tree-roots, remained at the top of the steep twenty-foot banks. Without a moment's hesitation the Mountie slipped under the overhang. Working his arms between two sturdy roots, thrusting his legs through others, he found a resting place for his head in a hollow mat and pressed his body close to the curve of soil that the sun's rays never penetrated.

SOON his arms and legs began to ache intolerably where the unyielding roots cut into them. But he dare not shift his position to ease the pain. After awhile a numbness pervaded his being and he lay there with one conscious thought—that to move was death. He waited.

There was the sound of running feet over the frozen ground, the excited jabbering of many voices in Cree, now near, now fading farther away. Up and down the sands they searched, their unbelieving eyes questioning every rock and pebble. At times they did not believe the evidence of their own eyes or the reliability of their own memory, for they would be seized with sudden doubt of either and would come tearing out of the bush, leap down to the beach, and repeat the search of the sands and rocks as before. Some of the more excited members even waded out on the water-covered ice as if it might hold a clue to the mysterious disappearance of the white man. Had they once chanced to glance up at the

(Continued on page 67)

Saskatchewan Government Archives

Fort Pitt, with the Saskatchewan River in the background. Within the banks of this river, the Mountie hid from the Indians.

VIOLENCE...

SPAWN of RAW GOLD

Moral: If you ever try to kill a man when he's helpless—unarmed and tied—make a good job of it. Second chances are few!

By ETHEL KIMBALL

Photos Courtesy Frank H. Rood—Shoup, Idaho

AMONG THE many harsh tales of human savagery, no story is more ironic than that of Charles "Chip" Evans, an early-day resident of Idaho's Lemhi County gold fields, whose vicious, cold-blooded brutality not only saved the life of his intended victim, but cost him his own.

The first evidence of Chip's sadistic nature became apparent at Salmon City while that town was quite young and still encircled by booming Leesburg, Shoup, Gibbonsville and Gilmore. It began when an agent of a Chinese burial society came to Salmon City to exhume two of his dead countrymen and ship the bodies back to their native land. These Chinamen had been buried temporarily at Butts Bar, deep in the Salmon River Canyon, prior to the time the gold camp there was abandoned.

No one in China could possibly have understood the herculean task that faced the burial agent. Although there was no quibbling about expense, it was only after many days of fruitless searching that the agent finally found a packer with a string of mules who agreed to do the job for $1,500. That was an enormous price, but it became trifling when the men discovered that all the gold the dead Chinese had placered had been buried with them for safekeeping until the bodies were claimed.

After considerable difficulty, the two bodies were brought to Salmon City for shipment to San Francisco. But the next morning they had disappeared; they had been stolen by a gang led by Chip Evans.

The agent got notice that he could have the remains back upon payment of $400. However, instead of making immediate settlement, the haggard Chinaman appealed to certain influential men in Salmon City. Inflamed with rage at this disgusting turn of events, the men sent word to Chip that if he wanted to keep his own body in one piece, he'd better return the deceased miners in a hurry, and they weren't fooling. Their rope was already knotted.

Chip knew they meant every word, so he hastily brought the two corpses back without ransom; and the burial agent finally completed the duty of shipping his fellow countrymen and their gold back to relatives in China.

FOR THE NEXT few years, Chip was in and out of minor clashes with the law, but in 1886 he tangled with an iron-willed young man named Ed Lyon, and began to wish for a law big enough for his own protection.

An organization called the Dynamo Mining Company was taking up all the gold property it could acquire in the area around Leesburg, about fifteen miles west of Salmon City. Among the men who fought their way into this rugged mountain country during 1886 was Ed Lyon, and although he was only twenty-one, even the roughest miners thought twice before testing his quick and violent temper.

Lyon teamed up with Red Magee, a saloonkeeper, and together they staked claims along Big Creek near the gold town of Dynamo, which had only recently sprung up. They built their sluices and started moving the rich pay dirt, and if they were aware they had staked claims the Dynamo Company wanted, they couldn't have cared less. Nor were they concerned when the mining outfit tried to move them off. The two partners simply ignored the hostilities that began breaking out all through the community, refused to listen to threats, and continued washing the shiny yellow metal out of the gravel.

It was inevitable that other miners would take sides, some with Lyon and Magee, others with the company. On November 11, 1886, Caleb Davis, manager of the Dynamo organization, decided to have a showdown, face to face with the partners. He backed his play with three characters of very bad reputation from Salmon City—Tom McKenney, Sam Vinson and the degenerate Chip Evans.

Fear was something Lyon knew nothing about, so he called the bluff. Hot words were exchanged for a few minutes; then suddenly tempers exploded into gunfire. There was some question later as to who started the shooting, but it ended with Davis' being shot and severely wounded by Red Magee; and Red Magee's being hit and mortally wounded by a shot from Chip. The latter and his two friends scurried into the timber and high-tailed it out. But even after they were safely away they couldn't rest because they were pretty sure that Lyon wouldn't let things stand the way they were.

Three days later, Magee died. In desperation, Chip hit upon the idea of getting rid of Lyon legally, even though he ordinarily would have preferred other means. He and his friends rode to Salmon City, and Chip swore out a warrant for Lyon's arrest, stating that Lyon had shot at them and would have killed them if they hadn't ridden into the trees. The three accusers described Lyon as a kill-crazy, trigger-happy, dangerous man whose vicious temper would drive him to murder anybody who crossed his path.

EXPECTING trouble in arresting Lyon, Under-sheriff Samuel Young, who was given the task of bringing him in, deputized William Reel and also asked Evans, Vinson and McKenney to help him. They went willingly, pleased at the prospect of doing away with Lyon when he resisted arrest.

Much to their surprise, Lyon surrendered peaceably. Chip still insisted that he was a desperate criminal, however, and persuaded the lawman to tie Lyon onto his horse with a rope knotted around Lyon's ankles and passed beneath the horse's belly.

At noon they left Dynamo and started over the mountains toward Salmon City. Reel led the procession, holding the lead rope of the prisoner's horse. McKenney rode close to Lyon, and Young was fourth in line with Vinson sticking close to him. Chip brought up the rear, where he could keep his eyes on all of them and be in position to get the drop on the whole bunch, if necessary.

The day was very cold. New snow glistened on the high mountains, and travel was slow. Lyon chafed his hands within their bonds and hunched his shoulders to protect his freezing ears, but there was nothing he could do for his numb feet.

Miserable as he was, he betrayed no discomfort. Instead he showed only amusement that these three so-called badmen still acted afraid of him when he was so apparently helpless. Once when he caught McKenney staring at him with an odd expression, he taunted, "You look scared. Ain't I tied good enough to suit you?"

McKenney muttered, "I just come along to see that you don't git away."

Lyon laughed and they rode on with only the sound of horses' hoofs breaking the silence. Whether Lyon was unaware that these three comrades had no intention of letting him stand trial and almost certainly be acquitted, or whether he felt safe with two lawmen along, or whether he anticipated trouble but knew he could do nothing about it, no emotion showed on his face. He had decided his best bet was just to sit his horse quietly and wait.

The party crossed the summit, and another hour passed as it wound its way downhill near the head of Moose Creek. Lyon still had given no sign of trying to escape or causing any trouble, so the three desperate friends decided they couldn't wait any longer—it was now or never!

Suddenly Vinson spurred his horse into Young's mount, shouted "Look here!" and prodded the surprised lawman in the head with a pistol. At the same instant, McKenney whipped out his .44 and shot Lyon full in the face. When the shot blasted the silent air, the deputy's horse lunged ahead and started to bucking, forcing Reel to drop the lead rope of Lyon's horse as he went careening off the trail fighting to get control of his own terrified animal.

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The upper end of the old mining town of Dynamo. Burrell Rood, son of Horace Rood who helped rescue Ed Lyon, is standing by the tent flap. The grave of Red Magee is a short distance downstream at the mouth of Clear Creek.

Lyon crumpled up and slid down the left side of his horse; his head barely clearing the ground. While hanging in this position, McKenney shot him again to make certain he was dead. Lyon's full weight was thrown on the binding around his ankles, and when the jolts of the plunging horse added more pressure, the rope snapped, letting the prisoner fall to the ground.

The horse shied to one side, then stood there trembling as McKenney grabbed its lead rope, handed it to Reel and ordered the two lawmen to get on down the trail. Without argument they left, though Young later testified before a grand jury that he had had a .44 pistol in the right side of his cantinas, which hung over the horn of his saddle, and also an English bulldog double action .44 in his hip pocket—but had made no attempt to reach either weapon.

NO ONE doubted that Lyon was dead, because even the first bullet had torn into him at point-blank range. They just hadn't reckoned with the rawhide toughness of this young miner, or the determined, blind hatred that kept him from giving up. He had never even lost consciousness!

Knowing that his only chance was to "play dead," he lay on his back, unmoving despite the agonizing pain. But he realized he couldn't hold out long because blood from the wounds in his neck and jaw was filling his throat and choking him.

Just as he reached the point where he would have to cough or strangle, Chip sauntered over through the reddened snow and stood glaring down at Lyon. Then, characteristic of his brutal makeup, Chip drew back his booted foot and kicked the "corpse" again and again, punctuating each blow with a string of curses. The bloody mess that once had been a young man's face seemed to disturb him most, and as a final insult, Chip rolled Lyon face downward, sneering in satisfaction, "There, the ugly s-o-b- looks better that way!"

At the end of his endurance, waves of relief washed over Lyon as he felt the blood drain out of his mouth and throat. He held himself in rigid stillness and listened as the three men mounted their horses and rode on down the mountain. Lyon was dazed, bleeding and torn with pain, but a hope to even the score provided a determination grim enough to keep him alive. Silently he swore revenge as he lay exhausted on the frozen earth.

HISTORICAL accounts, both written and verbal, differ as to how Lyon was rescued. The one most told and most believable is that he was picked up not long after the shooting by a group of men riding from Leesburg to Salmon City. These men, George W. Cronkrite, Henry Smith, Horace Rood, and others gave him first-aid as best they could, then wrapped him from head to toes in a blanket and loaded him on a horse.

When they had gone a bit farther, they came upon two of the would-be killers who were watching their back-trail. One of them stopped the party and asked suspiciously, "That ain't that s-o-b Lyon come back to life, you got there, is it?"

Mr. Rood answered, "No. This is a sick Chinaman we are taking to the doctor at Salmon City," and the men were allowed to pass.

Lyon was turned over to Egbert Nasholds, the county sheriff, who made him as comfortable as possible and called in the town's doctors, Kenney and Falkner, to treat his terrible wounds.

The spring session of district court, April 13, 1887, brought three of the en-

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Tales of Colorado Mining Camps

(Continued from page 12)

the change rooms and to "eyeball" lunch buckets helped some, yet fantastic amounts of gold were still funneled into illicit channels.

Dr. Ben H. Parker, former president of the Colorado School of Mines, visited the Ibex Mine to obtain a gold collection from the Little Jonny for the school. Dr. Ben says that the Ibex Company had to suspend normal mining procedures, due to its heavy losses. In desperation, the company initiated a lease system throughout the mine. As new stopes and working places were opened up, leasers bid for the right to mine certain blocks of ground, the lease going to the highest bidder. In this manner the company found they could function at a profit; there isn't any percentage in a man's stealing his own gold.

Up in Summit County, Breckenridge produced some fabulous specimens, especially in the narrow, rich veins on Farncomb Hill. There was wire gold, lace gold, shot gold, sheet gold, flake gold—the type souvenir collectors keep locked in their vaults. Specimens of intricate, lacy-wire gold, resembling models of old-time sailing ships, were found the size of a man's hand. Melted down, they might not amount to many ounces, but they sold for hundreds of dollars, even thousands.

Miners showed a natural reluctance to mucking those pretty specimens into a mine car or wheelbarrow. A few souvenirs always found their way out in lunch pails, shirts, shoes, a hundred different ways. When you heard a neighbor digging in his backyard at night, you knew he wasn't spading spuds or planting petunias. Not by a long shot. That fellow banked his social security for the future, or a stake in the next poker game.

Some owners hired spies. Others hired spies to spy on spies. A man didn't know in whom to confide. Even a trusted shift boss could be paid to look the other way. Though conscientious as far as the miners were concerned, he might not be entirely scrupulous about his own actions. It was a risky business, for a fellow mucker could turn out to be a Pinkerton agent. Worst of all, an honest fellow might be found with "planted gold" on him, when the ring strived to take the heat off of one of their own members.

Like a game of cat and mouse, high-grading demanded split-second timing. A shift boss could sneeze and a nice specimen was transferred from an overall pocket to the top of a cap in a set, for an accomplice to smuggle out later. Gold scooped off the riffles in a tobacco can was quickly covered with tobacco in case a suspicious mill man should ask one of his hands for the "makings." Dull-yellow gold does things to a man.

One fellow had no scruples at all. He didn't mine with a pick and shovel or a single jack—he had organized a "ring," operating in the background. That meant he took none of the chances, yet reaped most of the profits. Harvey L. Tedrow, a well-known mining engineer in Colorado and the West, knew the name of this shady character, but he would never reveal his identity. Try as I would, I could never pry it out of him, and now Ted is gone.

Tedrow managed the famous London gold mine at Alma and the Wellington at Breckenridge. One of Ted's favorite stories concerns the time he managed a placer property. Ted realized much of the gold was being stolen, but he couldn't catch anyone, buying or selling. His traps came up empty.

Finally he approached the manager of the adjacent property, and the two compared notes. Again this fellow's name remains anonymous. The other manager also complained about losing gold. He had hired a Pinkerton agent to investigate his company's losses.

"Those Pinkerton boys seldom miss," the manager told Ted, "and they'll find the dirty so-and-so who is stealing. He thinks he knows who the rascal is, already. If you'll pay half the $10,000 my company is putting up for the report, you can have a copy."

"That's fine with me," Ted agreed.

A few days later the manager called Ted and notified him that the Pinkerton report was available in Denver. Ted went over with a $5,000 check.

"Well, the Pinkerton man says he has found our man. We finally have that dirty crook."

Ted handed over the check.

"I'm on my way to Denver to pick up the report," the manager said. He went to Denver, then to El Paso, then to Mexico City, and finally to South America!

"I didn't mind the fellow getting away with some gold here and there," Ted told me, "but suckering me out of an additional $5,000 is something else. He was a slick one, all right."

Now let's get back to Ted's original story. We'll call the gold thief Mr. X. That's not much of a name but it's more than he deserves. He ended up with what he deserved—a number.

Mr. X had accumulated quite a lot of gold, enough to fill a nice-sized satchel. But he couldn't sell it locally, of course. You took gold in large amounts to San Francisco or New York.

The high-grader had visions of champagne, pretty girls, horses, cigars and beaches. He had them all right there in his satchel. But he thought maybe he ought to reinforce the satchel just in case. It would be embarrassing if the bag broke on a busy street corner. When the bag was reinforced to his satisfaction, he made plans to vacate the premises.

After the first snows in Breckenridge, there was only one way out of town—the narrow gauge over Boreas Pass to Como, and on to Denver. Mr. X didn't wish to be seen at the station laboring with a heavy bag. Everyone would guess at its contents.

Finally he had a friend with a wagon drive him out of town about a mile. In those days an engineer would slow a train down anywhere, except on a steep downhill grade, to let someone hop aboard. Mr. X found a flat rock, just high enough and just close enough. He sat down and waited until he heard the train.

Standing up, he gave the high sign to the engineer, who eased the throttle. Mr. X glanced down the line, picked his car, and got a firm grip on the handle of the bag. Keeping an eye on his car, he began the countdown. As the handrail he wanted came abreast, he gave a vicious tug at the suitcase full of gold, swung it hard and high, jumped for the step, grabbed for the handrail, and tried to steer his precious cargo to the platform.

His hand grabbed a rail, all right, and his foot found a step, but the heavy bag of gold fell on top of him, knocking him off the train. He lay there not moving. The engineer stopped the train and backed up.

Several passengers dismounted to assist the high-grader. He had a broken arm, a broken leg, a bruised head and a bellyache as a result of the gold falling on his midsection. They carefully carried X aboard.

While trying to figure out what had happened, someone picked up the reinforced satchel. The secret was out.

CORNISH MINERS were known as the "captains of the mining industry" and they were the real underground miners of the early camps. They provided know-how and a sense of humor. One Cousin Jack, who seldom left his cabin near Idaho Springs, took a trip to Denver for a bit of relaxation, staying at the famous Windsor Hotel.

On his return he described his treatment at the hotel: "I got into a cage and was hoisted to the 4th level, where I got out and went through a short crosscut to the main drift, and we went down the drift and entered a stope and I slept in the breast of it."

Shorty and Pete were Leadville miners. Undoubtedly they had last names, but after forty-five years when Jim Tiffany, then managing the Hilltop Mine, heard the story their names could not be supplied. That part is not crucial, for they did little to alter the course of history.

Tiffany, a mining engineer from the Colorado School of Mines, heard the story from Charles Vetters, who had worked at the Hilltop Mine in the early 1900s. Vetters recalls that his story took place about 1912 or 1913, when W. F. "Fred" Berger operated the Hilltop and Last Chance Mines under lease. The Hilltop is fourteen miles from Fairplay in Four Mile Amphitheatre, on the east side of the Mosquito Range.

Sam Doran, the superintendent, needed two miners. Actually he only needed one, but he asked for two. That needs an explanation. The year before, Sam had called Leadville for a miner, who hiked over Horseshoe Pass alone. Cold and exhausted, the miner reached the bunkhouse door and flopped down beside it. The next morning as the crew started for the adjacent boarding house they found the miner stiff and dead, leaning against the door frame.

So Doran called Leadville on the "hello line" and inquired about two miners. Two were available—Shorty and Pete. They could leave in a half hour, or about 9:30 P.M. The miners were driven up Iowa Gulch in a sleigh from the livery stable, going up the road toward the Continental Chief Mine, until the road forked and the deep snowbanks stopped the horse.

From then on the miners had to hike over the range. The night was cold and clear, about thirty below. Maybe colder. There was no wind and the moon glittered on the snow—an unusual sight in those parts. On the steep, east side of Horseshoe Pass, the wind sweeps the snow away, except for the ledges. The trail, switchbacking to the top, had been marked by a handrail, constructed of two-inch pipes driven into rock joints and crevices, and tees fastened to the tops. Old hoist cable strung through the tees made a continuous hand rope.

"Portions of the railing still remained on the east side of the pass in the late '50s," Tiffany recalls, "and Vetters said the handrail was always kept in good condition, for this switchback trail was the principal access to the mine."

Shorty and Pete wallowed through waist-high drifts to get to the trail, taking turns breaking snow. Even with the handrail, it was a steep climb, and the still, cold air needled their nostrils, numbed their foreheads, and chilled their lungs. Their hands grew cold, right through their gloves. They slipped, slid and floundered about. Stops were fre-

(Continued on page 44)

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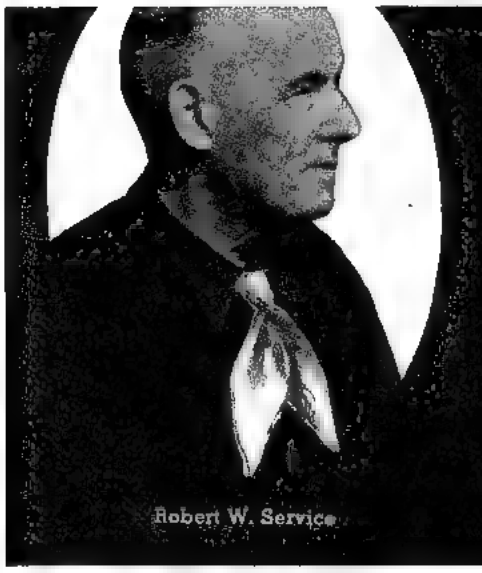

Robert W. Service

Robert W. Service
BARD OF THE NORTH

By RICHARD A. KING

"A bunch of the boys were whooping it up in the Malamute Saloon . . ."

Photo from PLOUGHMAN OF THE MOON, by Robert Service. Copyright—1945 Published by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.

IN 1958, sixty years after the Yukon gold rush, Robert William Service died. His passing caused little stir but this was the Robert W. Service, who in book and verse, lived with and wrote about men the likes of Jack London, "Soapy" Smith, the good and the bad of every state and territory of the changing American West—and for that matter the world—all drawn by gold to the frozen North.

Service was born January 16, 1876, in Preston, England, of Scotch-English parentage, and soon afterward was taken to Scotland, where he grew up. In Scotland he was reared by his grandfather and three Bible-addicted spinster aunts.

Around 1880, Service's father retired as a bank teller in Preston when his wife inherited a legacy that brought her an income of two hundred pounds a year. The couple moved to Glasgow, Scotland, and Robert joined his parents and brothers and sisters, who numbered nine at their peak.

Upon reaching the age of twenty-one, Service lit out on a tramp steamer for Canada. There he got a $15-a-month job on a farm near Duncan, British Columbia, a town about thirty miles north of Victoria. He saved $100 in ten months and quit. Most of the next few years were spent in and around San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego where Service worked as a dishwasher, sandwich man, tunneler, orange picker and gardener at a rural bordello. These activities, and others of a similarly modest nature, were relieved by periods of relaxation during which he simply bummed around the country, walking barefoot to save shoe leather, sleeping on benches to save mattresses, playing a guitar, and singing for his supper at farms.

Later he returned to Duncan, got his old job back, and three years later, when he had saved $200, he quit again. But his banking blood reasserted itself; he went to Victoria, and became a clerk in the Canadian Bank of Commerce. He got this post by exhibiting a testimonial from the Glasgow bank which he had been carrying around for ten years.

The Victoria bank offered him $50 a month, and after a few pay-days, he was transferred to Kamloops, a British Columbia inland town, followed by a transfer to White Horse in Yukon Territory in 1905.

IT WAS while Service was in his teens that he first started writing verse that appeared in the Glasgow weeklies. Then Service for years did not write another line until one day he started in again, in the Yukon. It was here that he wrote the poetry that made him famous.

By the time Service got to the Yukon, the Gold Rush of 1898 had begun to taper off, but the place was still fairly lively, and it had a profound influence on Robert Service. White Horse was the northern terminus of the seaboard railway the prospectors came inland on; from there they proceeded 460 miles by riverboat to the Klondike gold fields. The town held thousands of excited transients during the summer but dwindled to less than a thousand residents during the eight-month cold spell when, as Service has written, "the real life of the Yukon began."

The cold weather had an immediate and extraordinarily exhilarating effect on the young clerk. His bank closed at four; and he then took a three-hour walk through the snowy woods, generally accompanied by a dog. Evenings he spent more sociably, skating, tobogganing, dancing, or (in the celebrated phrase from *The Shooting of Dan McGrew*) just "whooping it up." He had written almost nothing since his teens, but then he began contributing verse to the town paper, *The White Horse Star*. One dull winter day the *Star's* editor asked him to compose a "local atmosphere" poem to be recited at a church concert.

Service took his usual three-hour stroll with his dog, dined at a saloon, returned to his teller's cage, and picked up a pencil. By five in the morning he had written *The Shooting of Dan McGrew*, which began thus:

A bunch of the boys were whooping it up in the Malamute saloon;
The kid that handles the music-box was hitting a jag-time tune;
Back of the bar, in a solo game, sat Dangerous Dan McGrew,
And watching his luck was his light-o'-love, the lady that's known as Lou.

After looking it over, he decided it wasn't precisely the thing for church, and when he got home he stuck it in a bureau drawer.

A month later, at a party, he heard a man from Dawson tell a story about a miner who, far from any undertaker, had resourcefully cremated a defunct associate. Service went off on a reflective six-hour stroll.

As he tramped through the snow in the moonlight, he thought out the fourteen stanzas of *The Cremation of Sam McGee*, a poetic obituary notable for rhyming "frozen chum" with "crematorium," and for utilizing an old joke about cremating a man who had long complained that he was never warm enough. He wrote this ballad out the next day and put it, too, in the bureau. On his hikes during the next two months, he composed ballads at the rate of about one a walk. Then his inspiration suddenly stopped.

The manuscripts got under some shirts and remained there for a year until Service, running low on haberdashery, uncovered them. He reread them with interest and decided to invest a $100 Christmas bonus he had received from the bank in having a few copies printed up and bound. From this small beginning Service went on to fame.

From White Horse, Service was transferred to Dawson where he worked until 1909. It was here that he gathered material for many more poems and also for his book, *The Trail of '98*. The banking career was over.

Later he wrote poetry about the First World War, and then about Paris, but his poetry about the Yukon is his most famous.

THE list of his poetical works are: *Songs of a Sourdough* (reprinted as *The Spell of the Yukon and Other Verses*) 1907; *Ballads of a Cheechako*, 1909; *Rhymes of a Rolling Stone*, 1912; *Rhymes of a Red Cross Man*, 1916; *Ballads of a Bohemian*, 1920; *Complete Poetical Works* (5 volumes) 1927; *Collected Verse*, 1930; *Bar-Room Ballads*, 1940; *Rhymes of a Rebel*, 1952; and *More Collected Verse*, 1955.

As a novelist Service won little fame

(Continued on page 58)

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Tales of Colorado Mining Camps

(Continued from page 42)

quent so they could get their breath. After what seemed like hours they finally reached Horseshoe Pass, between Mounts Sherman and Sheridan, which is always scoured clean by the prevailing winds from the west. As Vetters recalls, the miners broke over the top around midnight, or later.

Snow swept off the pass had gutted the trail below. Shorty and Pete stumbled on in a vague direction. The whiskey they had consumed earlier in the evening didn't seem to help now. Miserable and nearly frozen, they ached and pained. When they caught a glimmer of light from the Hilltop boarding house, paralyzed as they were, they were too weak to point and too exhausted to holler.

Simultaneously, Shorty and Pete decided to rest a bit. Why not? It was all downhill, now. They flopped down, back to back, heads on their knees. Ah! that helped. They needed a rest. It was more comfortable that way. Quite pleasant, in fact. It seemed warmer. They would take five and walk on down to the bunkhouse. It wouldn't hurt to rest for just five minutes. Just a ni-ce, lit-tle rest . . .

Meanwhile Doran became restless. He wanted to hit the sack but he had to wait until the two miners arrived. An hour went by, then two. Where were they? He guzzled coffee. He wondered how many cups of coffee he had downed. More than a dozen. He waited and drank coffee, drank coffee and waited. Where in blazes could they be? He rang Leadville. Were the two miners coming? Yes, they had left by sleigh about 9:30, and the sleigh had returned.

Outside, Doran could see no one along the trail. The snow glowed in the bright moonlight, a beautiful night. One should be able to spot a man silhouetted on the trail. Especially two men. He called. No response. He rang the triangular dinner gong. Not a sound from the hill. Sam felt something was wrong. He asked Charles Vetters and Dan McDonald to hike up the trail and see if they could spot the miners at the top, or coming up the west flank.

Vetters and McDonald bundled up. Near the top of the pass the two miners thought they saw something dark in a snowbank. They hello-ed ahead. Nothing stirred. Racing forward they found Shorty and Pete sitting back to back in a drift, frozen stiff. At least, immobilized. They couldn't get the men to talk or move. Were they still alive, they wondered? They couldn't tell. But they had to act fast for the miners were frozen into balls. Vetters thought the miners might be alive, but if they packed them down the hill, they might die before they reached the bunkhouse. And, frozen into balls, they would be awkward to carry.

Then the rescuers had an idea—a brilliant idea, they thought. Below them the "eternal" snowbank sloped steeply toward the buildings grouped at the mine. Why not roll the men down? Sure, why not? That would be the easiest way.

Just below the top of the pass the snowbank combs over, like a breaking ocean wave. Going over the crest of the comb, one could fall some twenty or thirty, maybe forty, feet before hitting the soft snow of the hillside. The snowbank was steep until it leveled off and disappeared around the flat area by the buildings.

A man in his right mind wouldn't permit anyone to push him off, but Shorty and Pete were in no position to protest. Vetters and McDonald quickly weighed the possibility of a snowslide resulting from their action. But there was no time to waste. One of the men gave a loud, Tarzen-like yell and when they saw Doran emerge from the boarding house, they picked up Shorty and started him like a bowling ball toward the comb of the snowbank.

Doran glanced up in time to see the first miner hurtle into space and land in the soft snow below the comb. Fascinated, he watched the giant bowling ball roll toward him, until it came to the flat area. He had no time to attend to Shorty for another war-whoop rang out on the hill above him, and Pete shot out into space. The second bowling ball plummeted toward Doran, bounding in crazy leaps. Doran, Vetters, and McDonald carried the two miners inside.

Shorty and Pete were still alive but in a state of shock. The whiskey inside them, the wild, tumbling, bouncing, end-over-end ride, and the sudden, rocky jolt at the end had started their blood circulating. They mumbled incoherently. Once inside, they warmed up, and the cook brought a steaming pot of coffee.

"Another half hour and they'd have been goners," Vetters said.

Shorty and Pete weren't in the best shape the next morning, and they went on shift with terrible hangovers. Still activities went on as usual; it was just another day at the Hilltop Mine.

IN THOSE DAYS, mine managers had plenty of problems, particularly during the winter months when the miners couldn't hike to town every night. Jim Tiffany has another tale about the Hilltop Mine and Sam Doran. Sam served as manager several times and he leased the property once after 1920. The mining camp of Leavick, two miles below the mine, changed its name to Doran for a couple of years.

One wintry day a group from the night shift gathered in the shaft house, washing their diggers between the steam boiler and friction-drive hoist. It was always warm in the hoist room. It seems this crew was prone to horseplay and quickly the suds and slippery-wet clothes got to flying around. Soap-suds and water got onto the hoist, as the hoistman raised some men from underground. The friction mechanism and brake became soaked, and the miners in the mine bucket, near the top, suddenly found themselves hurtling toward the bottom at a rapid rate, out of control.

Someone in the bucket hollered, "Hey!" but there wasn't much the frantic hoistman could do. He didn't have much time, anyway, for a bucketload of men drop 400 feet in a hurry. Finally the friction mechanism and brake took hold just ten feet before the bucket slammed into the sump.

Doran permitted no more clothes to be washed in the hoist room. In this decision he was completely backed up by several white-faced miners when they got back to the top and had recovered from the effects of their ride.

Hazards were just part of the game. Once two miners sloshed back to the bottom of the shaft and wearily plopped down while they took turns refilling their carbide lamps. Their concern was how to get to the surface, up or down.

As young fellows will, S. M. del Rio and Jerry Wallis put off making their decision. They were students at the Colorado School of Mines, and, at the time, were surveying an old, dismantled producer near Idaho Springs. Old mines can be dangerous, timbers breaking, back caving, ribs sloughing, ladders rotting,

(Continued on page 46)

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MY FRIEND, CRAZY HORSE

— and I didn't even know his name until the wild ones came to bury him

By BERTHA SHAFER HOWEY

Photo Courtesy Author

W. C. Shafer

Author's Note: My grandfather, W. C. Shafer, was born in Wittenberg, September 27, 1827. He never learned to speak English very clearly. He died April 22, 1914. He talked of living near Omaha, Council Bluffs and Sioux City. Grandfather was present at the burial of the great chief, Crazy Horse, and this is his story as he told it to me.

ONE DAY while walking along the seashore in my native Germany I noticed a strange ship. I strolled over to look at it. A queer looking man in feathers and buckskin clothing was passing out free samples of "Johnny Cake" which he said was made from a grain called Indian corn. It was very delicious.

His tales set me to dreaming of America. So I worked very hard and saved every way that I could. In a few years I sailed for this distant land, speaking only German, but with the address of a German settlement in New York in my pocket.

I was royally greeted at the settlement and soon I was working days and learning English at night in order to become a citizen of the United States.

However, it was not all work and no play. There were gay times. At one of these dances I met a sweet girl named Caroline Smith. Soon she became my wife. She had the same ambitions as I. We saved and skimped for our dream.

The year of 1865, by train and stage, we started our trek to Iowa where I heard the corn grew the tallest. At a small settlement I purchased a team of mules which we named Dan and Sam, a covered wagon, and a milch cow we called Brindle. As we were heavily loaded I planned to buy farm tools after we settled on our homestead.

The plains seemed limitless and there was much to choose from. I finally selected a place with a hill. For our first home a cellar was dug out of the hillside. When the weather permitted we lived outside under a fly made from the wagon top.

We didn't put in a crop the first spring. We were kept busy building shelters for ourselves and the animals, cutting and storing hay and cutting and stacking wood for the winter.

After several years our homestead began to look like a home. We made a soddy of slabs of soil, one on top of the other. In this humble dwelling our three children were born.

We heard rumors that the Indians were going to wipe out the settlers for invading their land. At first the redskins attacked outlying settlements, burning homes and running off stock, but killing no one.

THE WINTERS seemed to get colder and colder. Snow drifting over the windows to the housetops was not uncommon. Inside the door I kept a shovel to dig a path to the animal shelter. Had it not been for a clothesline fastened from the door to the barn, I would never have been able to find it.

One such evening I heard a scraping and thumping as though an animal had fallen against the door. I quickly opened it and in staggered an Indian brave.

Caroline and I were stunned but we were not afraid as we could see the Indian was nearly frozen. I rubbed and patted his face and hands while Caroline spooned hot tea sweetened with honey into his mouth. Then he was able to hold a second cup and drank eagerly.

I helped him remove his outer garments, which were iced and beginning to thaw. They consisted of a kind of cape made of buffalo hide, hair side out, moccasins and a pair of inner moccasins with fur next to his feet. His leggings came up over some kind of breeches and a shirt-like garment. These we left on.

Caroline went about preparing supper. The little girls looked on with curiosity but soon returned to play.

By the time the meal was ready, the Indian was able to move about and ravenously devoured the food Caroline heaped into a bowl, eating with his fingers and cleaning them by licking after the food was gone.

The Indian watched, never making a sound, as Caroline washed and put away the dishes, then prepared the children for bed.

Only once did fear strike my heart— the smiling Indian pointed to my daughter Mina's flaxen braids and then to his coal-black braids. But my wife smiled in return as she knew he was only making a comparison.

After the children were asleep, the Indian pointed at the floor near the fire and placed his head on his hands and closed his eyes. I understood and spread a wagon sheet for him. Soon he was fast asleep.

Caroline and I retired. We knew that if the Indian had intended any harm to us he would have done it already or if we had meant to harm him we would have done so while he was helpless. Next morning we found the blizzard had gone with the night and also our visitor, without a trace of having been there.

Sometimes after that a few Indians stopped by our homestead and Caroline gave them fresh baked bread or a cake or pie. Settlers near us had horses stolen and homes burned yet we were never molested.

The Government advised all homesteaders to come to the settlement for protection. This was agreeable to Caroline and me as the children could get better schooling there.

Then prospectors discovered gold in the Black Hills on the reservation given to the Indians by the Treaty of 1868. They appealed to Washington to stop the prospectors' invasion. The Government agreed to do so but sent troops to protect the invaders instead. The enraged Sioux and their allies immediately left their reservation and began plundering and killing.

The country was shocked. The Department of Interior ordered General Miles with the Fifth Infantry to conquer the Sioux.

Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull separated for better protection, Crazy Horse to the south, Sitting Bull and his followers, a jump ahead of General Miles, toward the Canadian border.

Two Moon, the war chief of the last band of the Cheyennes, an ally of Crazy Horse at Little Big Horn, brought his followers to Red Cloud Agency. Discouraged and seeing that further fighting was useless, Crazy Horse sent an Indian runner to the Agency with news that he was ready to surrender. (This left only one small band of hostiles out. They were called the wild band and were not much of a threat.)

THE NIGHT before they were to pass through our settlement on their way to Red Cloud Agency I heard a light tapping on the door. There stood a blanket Indian with a feather in his hair. I did not recognize him until he extended his hand saying, "How, John." Indians called most all white men "John."

Using an English word now and then to supplement sign language, he made me understand the Sioux were coming the next day. Washington had sent horses and wagons to haul in their families and had promised them an annuity and cattle to replace the buffaloes so wantonly destroyed.

He was happy his people need not suffer any longer. This the Great Father promised and he wanted me, his friend, to share in his good fortune.

I tried to make him understand this was not for us; Washington would not permit it even if we had wanted to. He seemed disappointed when I took his hand in farewell.

In a holiday mood the next morning we watched the Sioux come in, dressed in

(Continued on page 57)

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Tales of Colorado Mining Camps

(Continued from page 44)

water damming up behind caved areas. There might be bad air, or worse yet, ghosts in the dark, gloomy passageways.

They knew that returning via the shaft meant a tortuous, 340-foot, vertical climb back to the collar. Moreover, it had to be executed over a slippery, near-rotten ladder with many of the rungs missing or loose, and acid water dripping or splattering on them all the way. After a hard day underground, the young miners didn't relish the thought of that climb out, not with all their gear.

The alternate route was about as bad, an internal raise which supposedly would lead them down to the main-haulage level, a hundred feet below. This tunnel would take them to the surface, if they were lucky.

"Let's go down," Del said. It was agreed.

Carrying the lighter equipment, Jerry started first, gingerly testing the damp ladderway, rung by rung. Del watched as he maneuvered the first two ladders and transferred to the third. Forty feet down. So far, so good. Now all he could see was the faint, yellowish blob of light bobbing weirdly in the cylinder of blackness.

Then Del started down, packing the cumbersome transit, protecting the side telescope from bumping the rock walls or the ladder. As he descended, he could hear his partner sing out as he came across bad or missing rungs. Wallis could move faster and soon his light was barely visible, his voice a hollow vibration in the void below. Down, on down. Del Rio heard Wallis shout out something, followed by a splash, and the light below vanished.

Just then a rotten rung came loose in del Rio's hand, nearly causing him to lose his footing and plunge into space, and he spent a hectic few minutes clawing for a solid hold against the clammy ladder. Del managed to hang onto the transit, but in the scramble his mine cap and carbide lamp plummeted down the raise.

Bad luck. Then more bad luck. Del found his matches completely soaked and his waterproof match container had been left at home.

He hollered for Jerry. No reply. Why in blazes didn't he show up with his light? Cautiously he crept down, feeling his way, hollering at each rung. He eased himself down until he hung by one hand on the last rung. He clutched the transit in the other. His feet dangled in space. Just eight feet, he thought, just a lousy eight feet.

DEL hung there, thinking about the icy-cold water below, cursing the old mine, Jerry, and everything about the mining game. Then his numbed hand gave way and he dropped into the drain ditch, waist-high with water, and he lost no time scrambling to track level.

Jerry wasn't around. His lamp was in the water. Del stuck his hand in the drain ditch to determine the direction of flow, then he headed out, down drain.

Without a light, the going was slow. The tunnel followed a twisting course. Del walked with his hands in front of his face, spraddle-legged, his feet keeping contact with the track. Inching along in the gloomy darkness, he had a horrible recollection. Somewhere along the tunnel from the raise, he couldn't remember which direction, an open ore pass dropped into the flooded lower workings. The thought of dropping into an opening stopped him. He sat down on the track.

Then he thought he saw a light, way down the tunnel. Was that Jerry? He sang out. No one answered. Still he could see something shining. It sort of shimmered, eerily luminous, and then faded out. It wasn't a carbide light. Maybe he was seeing things. It was a ghostly-white thing, tall, moving, getting taller, moving closer.

A terrible realization came over him. He must be overcome by bad air. Carbon monoxide. Sure! That was it. Bad air. Had his buddy been trapped? Must get out, he thought. But he couldn't move.

Fright, coming sudden, can rob a young man of his reason. Del could see only a shimmering, white object directly in front of him. As he clutched the rusting rails with numbed fingers, the eerie thing began vacillating back and forth.

"There are no ghosts! There are no ghosts! I am dreaming," he thought.

Slowly he grabbed the transit and poked it at the cursed thing in front of him. Then as he watched, horrified, the spook in front of him slid out a dead-white arm and a cold, slimy, ectoplasm-soft hand gently slapped him in the face.

In one terrifying instant del Rio's legs found strength and he began racing pell-mell down the pitch-black tunnel, hollering at the top of his lungs.

"Jerry! JERRY!"

Suddenly the tunnel changed course and as he banged into rock wall, a great burst of light blinded him, and he fell across the tracks and headlong into the drain ditch.

"What happened, Del?"

Del came to and saw his friend, Jerry. All he could think of was getting out of that miserable place, that miserable, ghost-ridden hole. Jerry coaxed the story out of del Rio, and pooh-poohed the nonsense about a ghost.

"Ghosts went out with the old Cornish miner, Del."

Finally, Wallis talked del Rio into retracing his steps. Sure enough, the ghost remained, still guarding the tunnel, unafraid of the bright carbide light and human reinforcements. Not so fearful-looking now, though, this inoffensive, long, slimy pendant of lacy, spiderweb-like mold, hung from a rotten timber, waving ever so gently.

Sitting on the track again, Del watched the slimy object undulate and quiver as he breathed against it. Jerry doused his light. The lacy stuff proved to be lightly phosphorescent, glowing in the darkness, swelling in its dimensions.

Del tore the web-like membrane down, and the miners had a good laugh. Jerry had found the portal standing; everything was back to normal.

Thinking about it, thirty-five years later, Del said, "Had Jerry not forced me to go back, and had I not seen the thing for myself—well, I guarantee young and old alike that a brand-new, hair-raising, and absolutely-authenticated ghost story would have been born that very day."

A JOKE is one thing, and the miners enjoyed a bit of horseplay, but Rupert Sherwood carried things too far. Rupe tooted his own horn quite often, but he never repeated this story. Arthur McNair, whose father was a U.S. Mineral Land Surveyor in Leadville for many years, and Bob Risk retell the tale from those who were there and failed to see the humor of the situation.

Coming from the East as an eager, young greenhorn, Sherwood almost immediately made a good strike, sold out at a handsome profit, and went back home

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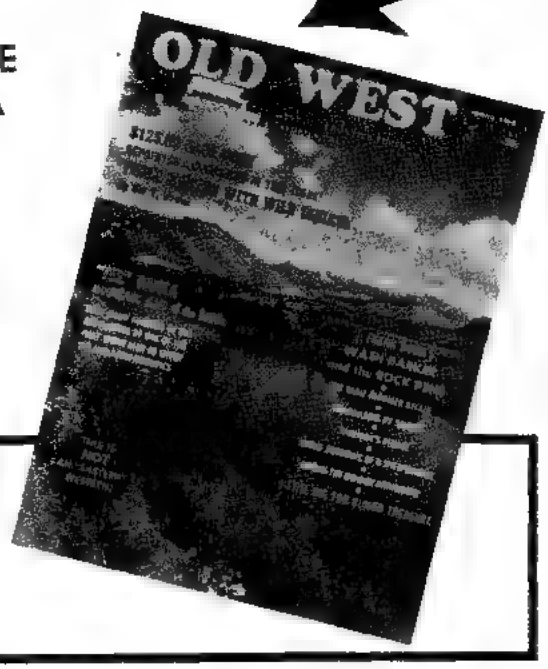

THE SPRING, 1966 ISSUE OF **OLD WEST,** ON SALE JANUARY 4th, IS A BIG, **BIG, 96** PAGE BONANZA OF **GREAT WESTERN READING**

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to retire. His money soon vanished due to youthful recklessness. He returned to Fairplay and Alma hoping to recoup his fortune, and set himself up as a mining engineer and promoter, but, as luck would have it, he scratched for a living the rest of his life. He spent most of his time prospecting when he could find an "angel" who would grubstake him. True of most prospectors, he didn't care for underground work, so when times were slack, he hired on as a cook.

One night as the boys sat around the bunkhouse chewing the fat and drinking, the group began to brag on Rupe's culinary prowess. The little bantam rooster enjoyed this. Nothing pleased him as much as a pat on the back, unless someone handed him a $1,000 grubstake, no strings attached.

It seems that the miners particularly liked Rupe's bread and flapjacks. No cook had ever pulled as tasty a loaf of bread out of the oven or flipped as light a flapjack. His recipe had to contain something different.

Rupe beamed. He had a special recipe, all right, but he wouldn't divulge his secret. They just couldn't pry the secret ingredient out of the wily prospector.

After the whiskey disappeared, the group broke up, and Rupe returned to the boarding house, where he had a tiny room off one end. Feeling exceptionally good, Rupe chuckled all the way back. It had been a pleasant evening. Oh, yes! Quite pleasant!

Unbeknownst to Rupe, the miners hadn't turned in. After he left they had gathered on the mine dump. One of the miners noted the light coming from the boarding house and casually peered in. Sherwood was urinating in the bread and flapjack batter, howling with drunken glee.

The story ends five minutes later. That's all the time it took for the miners to pummel the cook half to death. His face, the next morning, had puffed up like his own doughy batter. His bread and flapjacks never again had that special quality. Grudgingly, the boys admitted the victuals weren't quite as tasty.

Tales of romance are scarce, yet an occasional story emerges from the obscurity of time and memory. Except for a few sensational headliners, romance in the camps was without particular distinction.

Prospectors and mule skinners were nonentities, unless they made a big strike. Gunslingers and hoodlums fill pages of history while hard-working, sincere miners receive honorable mention.

Correspondingly, nice girls seldom persist in history or legend. Mining-camp tales record the deeds of the more colorful—Silver Heels, Baby Doe Tabor, Red Slippers or Poker Alice. Miners especially relished the bad-girl-turned-good-girl type.

Men outnumbered the women at Quartzville, ten to twenty, maybe thirty, to one. A few miners brought wives. Unattached females loitered around the saloon or gambling house, waiting for the dark hours. Other ladies of questionable background breezed in from Alma and Montgomery for the Saturday night shindig. Just as there weren't enough quartz veins to go around, there weren't enough women, either. Some ladies capitalized on this disproportionate ratio.

Named for gold-bearing quartz lodes found in 1861, Quartzville nestled in tall pines just below timberline, on the east flank of Mount Bross. Just a stone's throw from the straggling cabins, ancient, twisted, gnarled, low-angle-leaning, storm-deformed, gravity-defying bristlecone pines attested to the forces of Nature. Quaking aspen grew up when snowslides uprooted the tall pines.

The altitude and weather did things to a man, too.

QUARTZVILLE'S existence can be equated to the struggle of the miners to earn a living. Both failed and by 1865 the camp was all but deserted. When the rich silver ore of the Moose Mine came into prominence in '71, the camp suddenly sprang back to life. Miners preferred living below timberline and hiking to work, climbing 2,500 feet, vertically, in the two-mile jaunt which took them to near-14,000-foot elevations.

A wagon road wound* from Alma through Quartzville and up to the Russia Mine, near the top of Mount Lincoln. Cursing teamsters hollered their blowing animals to the top with supplies, and roughlocked them down with high-grade silver ore. Jack trains became the only feasible method of transportation during the winter months.

Jake Fletcher lived in Quartzville during its liveliest days of nearly 300 people. Billy Redman, the blind miner, knew Fletcher for he spent considerable time in the camp after 1871, trying to make a go of the St. Louis claim and driving the Redman tunnel of the Russia Mine. Jake worked for Billy off and on, and the hint of his story filtered down through Jim Redman. Everett Bair, for many years Park County historian, dug as deep as he could and came up with additional nuggets for contemporary readers of the Fairplay *Flume.*

Depending on the season, Jake was either a teamster or a jack man. His worldly assets consisted of a string of mules, a mule barn, a one-room, chinked cabin, and a few extra bucks in a sock under a loose floorboard behind his bunk. What else could a man want?

All his life Jake had needed only the company of his mules or jacks. But now he began to "cogitate" about a cook. This business of getting up in the black of night to take care of the mules and then cook breakfast so he could be on the trail at the first glimmer of light in the sky appealed to him less and less. After a hard, bitter, sun-to-sun day, he had to curry his animals by lantern light, then cook a late, tasteless supper.

The only way he could afford a cook was to marry one—and why not? He had never thought about a permanent woman. In his younger days there had been girls along the way but only on a temporary basis. Grizzled, time-worn, old before his time, "sot" in his ways, his eyes paled by the cruel elements, his face etched into a topo sheet, his thinning hair struggling to remain in place like the trees above timberline, Jake had no illusions of love. Yet it is not surprising that he ended up with a woman about half his age.

No one knew much about Myrtle, even then. Some say she had been a sporting woman in Leadville. You sort of sense that she had been ill-used by the pleasure-seeking miners, and had finally tired of her synthetic role. By a quirk of Fate she found herself in a marrying mood at the same time Jake became obsessed with the idea of a cook.

Myrtle realized Jake was much too old, but he seemed kind and gentle. And strong, too. Women like a strong man. He would treat a woman well. An older man would have had his fling with the dance-hall girls. She chuckled inwardly when he said he needed a cook.

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Men could sure beat around the bush, she thought.

Pleasure outlets were few in Quartzville. After riding the high, hard seat on a quartz wagon all day, Jake felt too tired for play and he didn't want any wagon rides to Alma on Sundays. Or if he hiked up and down Mount Lincoln or Bross prodding a string of mules, he couldn't care less about a hike in the woods. Or visiting. Or playing cards. A man is what he is and you can't change him. To Jake things had worked out well. He could sleep an hour longer in the morning and relax an hour after supper, before turning in.

Marriage proved a drastic change for Myrtle, though. Too drastic. True, she had wanted a change, but she learned that married life could be monotonously regular and regularly monotonous. Bundles of clothes to wash, piles of socks to darn, pails of water to fetch, pots of sowbelly and beans to cook. Long, dull days and longer, duller nights. She saw Jake a few minutes by candlelight in the early morning as he hogged down a pile of flapjacks. At night she waited for the late supper, listened to "mule talk," then washed the stack of dishes, while Jake smoked his pipe and scratched his feet at the other end of the wood range.

She could take the days, not the nights. One thing for sure, she wasn't about to sit home on Saturday night. When sweet talk didn't turn the trick, she burst into a tirade about "never doin' nothin'," and Jake would give in. After all, he could sleep on Sundays. From then on she was on her own, unless she wanted to listen to her husband talk politics with old-timers like Price and Edwards.

Fletcher could move with the grace of a panther on the trail, but on the dance floor he was as graceless as a bull elk floundering in four feet of snow. A young friend of Jake's always attended the dance. James Curry worked for Jake when the jobs piled up. Girls thought Jim danced divinely. He knew all the latest steps, and he had good habits.

With so few women in camp, Jim didn't have a wide choice of partners. Jim asked Jake if he could dance with Myrtle. Sure! Why not? Jake wanted to rest his "wearies," anyway. They whirled away, a blur of grace and beauty. The music intoxicated Myrtle. Some of the old longings, relics of the past, clouded her senses.

Music made one forget. Sleeping made Jake forget. He took to going home early; Jim would bring Myrtle home.

One Sunday morning Jake woke with an uneasy feeling—like pack rats had looted his cache of money or a mountain lion stalked his mules. He pulled on his heavy boots, slipped into his britches, hoisted his suspenders over his long-johns, and strode outdoors.

Splashing cold water on his face brought him around. It dawned on him, then. He hadn't heard the mules. He checked the barn. No mules. And no wagon, no Jim Curry, no Myrtle. All gone. Funny they should all disappear at the same time. He roused the camp, a yawning, unconcerned bunch. What did he expect? Couldn't he tell a floozie when he saw one? And her half his age and all.

Disgruntled, Jake walked to Alma. Nobody was going to steal his mules and get away with it. Jake found his outfit at the livery stable, and he learned that the young couple who brought the mules and wagon in had taken the stage to Denver.

No matter. He had his outfit back. He drove back to Quartzville and put

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his animals up. Monday came and went, and the rest of the week. Then several weeks. Jake ate sowbelly and beans three times a day.

Occasionally a bit of news drifted back, and the pieces of the puzzle fit together. Jim had promised Myrtle a lot, the whole world, then abandoned her with a beating and a week's rent. Old-timers from Montgomery brought home the story.

Fletcher came through with flying colors. He hired a muleskinner for a week. Next he cleaned the manure off his boots, ironed a white shirt, and took a bath. Strangest of all, he dumped half the money from the sock under the floorboards into his pockets just before he hiked, whistling all the way, to Alma, boarding the stage to Denver.

Taking a room, he went out shopping. He bought some low-cut shoes, the kind a fellow would go dancing in, and he purchased some jewelry, the sort a lady might wear to a dance. Then he gravitated toward a cheap rooming house. He knocked on a certain door. A surprised Myrtle peered out.

"Jake! Jake! Jake!" She buried her head against his massive chest.

"There, there, now!" Jake couldn't think of much to say. The pretty speeches he had formulated just wouldn't come to mind.

Myrtle sobbed and Jake stuttered. Luckily he remembered the jewelry. It matched the sparkle of her tears. Somehow he managed to blurt out how he had been a "little mite" stupid and what a "right purty" girl she was. Lordy, he thought, a man can really run off at the mouth.

Old-timers said Jake guarded his most valuable possession—Myrtle, not the mules—a bit more jealously when they returned to their one-room cabin. Occasionally you found him performing a hand-clapping jig, when he could induce the fiddler to play some floor-shaking, boot-stomping music. On Sundays the Fletchers rode to Alma to watch the pony races. Myrtle learned to cook sowbelly and beans several different ways.

Again the story fades. Jim Redman couldn't supply any other ending. Bair lost the couple when Quartzville died. Miners began deserting their cabins in the late '70s. Ed Snell, an old-timer from Fairplay, says his dad, Big Ed, first visited Quartzville in the early '80s and only a handful of diehards remained.

The camp robbers and pack rats moved to new camps. Whistle pigs continued to tunnel for four months and sleep for eight. Conies claimed the high country. Once in awhile an old prospector, silhouetted against the sky, scouted along the ridges, stopped occasionally to dig a pit or examine some rock, then moved on. Ghosts took a long-term lease on Quartzville.

And the Fletchers went over the hill and out of sight.

AND THOSE are a few of the tales you might hear around Colorado mining camps. They are not my stories. They belong to the colorful old-timers and to the lonely, mysterious mountains. They belong to a former era when you could yet hear the clear ring of cold steel on the slopes.

So the old miners and prospectors have passed in review. A few remain but they are dubious of Colorado's future. One told me, "Colorado has had her heyday. She'll never be the same again."

Editor's note: Maybe so—maybe not. Anyway, there's a sequel to this story which will run in the next issue—the April TRUE WEST. It's all about the miners who struck it rich, and there were more than a few. You'll enjoy it.

Who Killed Oliver Yantis?

(Continued from page 25)

positive identification of Oliver Yantis was all the Kansas sheriff needed. He was now ready to take his man.

ON NOVEMBER 28 Beeson was in Stillwater. After talking to Hueston he decided that he should travel on to the territorial capital at Guthrie and secure a warrant as well as local authority to arrest his man. Hueston accompanied the sheriff who "then and there . . . procured a warrant for the arrest of Oliver Yantis; and then and there by proper proceedings . . . was duly commissioned as an officer of said Territory of Oklahoma to execute said warrant which was then and there placed in his hands."

By the next evening, November 29, Beeson and Hueston were back in Stillwater. They recruited Hueston's brother, Thomas J., who was city marshal and like Hamilton, a pioneer of the place, and George Cox to assist them in capturing Yantis. Later that same night the four rode out toward Orlando near which the McGinns and Yantis lived. They arrived at their destination early in the morning.

Beeson's story of the outlaw's capture was stated simply in his affidavit:

"On the appearance of said Oliver Yanties this affiant informed him that he had a warrant for his arrest and told him to throw up his hands and consider himself his prisoner; that thereupon and instantly said Oliver Yanties fired upon affiant and said other parties with a pistol, which fire affiant and said other parties returned, shooting said Oliver Yanties through the body, from the effect of which shot he fell to the ground mortally wounded . . . ."

H. B. Hueston's affidavit was just as terse but confirmed all Sheriff Beeson wrote. Only after the Kansan returned home did he open up and give the full details of the fight which were then printed in the Dodge City *Globe-Republican*, December 2, 1892:

On his arrival in Stillwater Sheriff Beeson learned that two of the three robbers (later identified as Bill Doolin and George "Bitter Creek" Newcomb) had left the area, probably going into the Creek nation to a place called the Dalton rendezvous, fifty miles to the east. The third, Yantis, was still at the McGinn place. Though two of the birds had flown, the sheriff determined to caoture the fowl still in the bush.

With the Hueston brothers and Cox, Beeson started for the McGinns' around midnight. They arrived at their destination about 6:30 in the morning and dismounted out of sight of the house and about eighty rods away. Hiding their horses they made their way to a corral within twenty rods of the house, the morning fog hiding their approach. Beeson placed his posse between the corral and the house and settled down, hoping Yantis would eventually venture out. The last thing they wanted was for Yantis to use the house as a fortification.

A half hour went by. The possemen, cold and damp from the morning air, squinted almost blindly into the night, straining to catch sight of their man. The fog swirled close to the ground; the late autumn darkness held so that vision was almost nil.

Suddenly, an ethereal form materialized before them, moving slowly, almost floating through the mist and fog. The

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lawmen leaned forward trying to distinguish its features. It came on, finally assuming the shape of a human figure. When it was within fifty feet of the posse, H. B. Hueston leaned toward Beeson and whispered. It was Oliver Yantis.

The sheriff could wait no longer but stood up and yelled at the outlaw to surrender. Instead of heeding the demand, Yantis jerked a pistol from a shoulder holster under his left arm and fired. The bullet, though directed at Beeson, missed. Now H. B. Hueston pulled the trigger of a shotgun he had leveled at Yantis but the weapon misfired. Yantis, hearing the snap of the hammer, whirled and fired at the sound. He missed again.

Then Beeson, Thomas Hueston and George Cox fired. "The report was as one gun," the *Globe-Republican* reported. Yantis fell backward badly wounded and Beeson commanded, "Don't shoot again, he is done for."

BUT YANTIS was far from finished. No sooner had he touched the ground than he fired again, this time grazing George Cox who swore to finish him then and there but Beeson again interfered saying the outlaw was so badly wounded that he couldn't get away.

Yantis, who had by now emptied his revolver, reloaded and began firing again. The posse was unable to discern his position exactly because of the fog, gunsmoke and lingering darkness. Yantis continued to shoot while the posse held its fire.

Finally Yantis' sister, Mrs. McGinn, came out of the house "to see what was up." Beeson called to her to persuade her brother to surrender.

"She is a nervy young woman," reported the *Globe-Republican*, "and very beautiful. The terrible scene did not appear to dismay her in the least, [she] demanding to know what all that shooting was for, but finally procuring the gun from her crippled brother with evident reluctance on her part. . . . The lady . . . is reported as not at all slow with a revolver herself."

With their opponent disarmed, the officers walked up to survey the results of their work. Yantis was badly wounded. One bullet had entered his right side just above his hip and, ranging downward, had severed his spinal column. Another shot struck Yantis' Russian leather pocketbook which contained some of the money taken from the Speareville bank. The leather and money saved Yantis from another wound but several of the bills were pierced and torn by the bullet.

The only thing the posse could do for Yantis was take him to the nearest doctor at Orlando, two and a half miles away. A wagon was procured and Yantis soon lay in an Orlando hotel bed. But the efforts of the physician were to no avail and Yantis died at one in the afternoon "cursing the laws and officers of justice. The man was game to the last, making no confession or admission," the paper stated. "There can be no doubt, however, as to his identity," the *Globe-Republican* went on, "as he wore an overcoat purchased in Garden City just before the crime, and had on his person several silver certificates identified by the Speareville bank as part of the stolen money. Furthermore, his peculiar boots and large sombrero hat were easily recognized as having been worn at the time of the robbery."

After Yantis was laid out, Sheriff Beeson hired an Orlando photographer to record the dead man in his coffin, his hands folded neatly across his chest, giving no hint of the violent manner in which he died. Beeson was not motivated by any ghoulish feelings but knew that he would have to offer confirmation of the outlaw's death and identity in order to collect the reward and to prove an innocent man had not been killed.

The money found on Yantis was turned over to Chief Deputy U. S. Marshal Chris Madsen who properly receipted for the torn cash by writing "Received of Sheriff C. M. Beeson one pocketbook containing Fifty-five (55.00) dollars taken from one Oliver Yanties when arrested Nov. 30/92."

Yantis' body was claimed by Mrs. McGinn for burial in a now forgotten grave.

Beeson and his posse agreed to split the reward with $150 going to Hueston and his aides, and $300 to the Kansas sheriff.

The documents recently found in the archives of the Kansas State Historical Society are the affidavits and evidence presented by Sheriff Beeson to the Governor of Kansas in an effort to obtain the reward. Though Governor Lyman U. Humphrey refused, his successor, Governor Lorenzo D. Lewelling, approved the payment a few weeks later after additional evidence had been submitted.

Sheriff Beeson had taken only one of the three robbers but his home-town papers exulted in the feat. "His [Yantis'] demise is looked upon by the better class of those who knew him as a blessing. The spell is broken by a Ford County officer, and it is now only a matter of time when his confederates will be behind the bars or meet the fate of their comrade," the *Globe-Republican* stated.

The editor was correct. Both Bill Doolin and Bitter Creek Newcomb were eventually killed. However, until now, the paper's December 9, 1892, charge "to future biographers of 'deeds of heroism' . . . [to undertake] the pleasing duty of awarding to our sheriff the homage which we think he has justly earned" has not been fulfilled. From this point forward may historians assign glory where glory is due.

Dissertation on the Cow Chip

(Continued from page 27)

had fed cattle in that area. This must have been his feed ground.

She and the boy rode to their house and returned with a wagon. Upon reaching the site of their discovery they found another wagon there. A woman and two children were loading it with cow chips—those which she and her son had stacked. When challenged, Mrs. Y asserted that she had equal rights with the discoverer, since the land belonged to neither, and that discovery did not constitute ownership. Angry words led to a pitched battle in which the two locked horns and fought it out. Which emerged as victor is still a controversial subject on the "Yanner" (Llano Estacado), for each returned to her home with a wagon piled high.

Both women lost approximately the same amount of temper, blood, skin and hair, so the contest is usually considered a draw. And in spite of injuries, each participant in the fracas started before daylight the next morning to salvage what remained of the cow chips. Several trips were required for transporting them.

IN THE SPRING and summer of 1918, the Plains got no rain. Ranchers were forced to borrow in order to feed their cattle. Moreover, because of the

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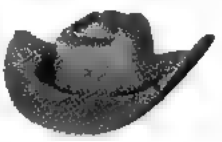

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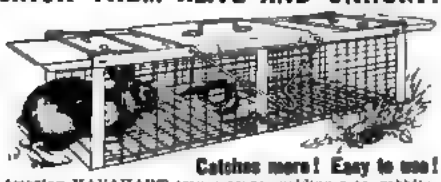

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war many commodities were rationed. Mrs. Wilson's father bought his winter's supply of coal in August.

The younger Wilsons had built a house of lumber and were using their dugout for chickens. For the house, one by twelves were stood vertically and strips nailed over the cracks. There were glass windows and a board floor. But the building had depleted their funds and they could not buy coal.

About the middle of October they took their baby, three months old, and went horseback to visit her parents. A sudden blizzard swept in from the northwest and they were forced to spend the night. The storm was so severe that they could not leave for days. Had they been at home it is doubtful that they could have survived the prolonged cold.

As frequently happens, when the storm subsided and the snow melted, they had several weeks of beautiful weather in which to prepare for a really cold winter. A carload of coal was shipped to Elida but no customer was permitted to buy more than 400 pounds. That meant that cow chips must supply their cooking and heating needs. The edict affected not only the ranchers, but the people who lived in the village—including the banker. He needed fuel for both his home and his place of business. He offered what was considered a fantastic price for cow chips, but though almost every rancher in the country had borrowed money from him, there were no takers.

Men riding out to work cattle carried gunny sacks for collecting fuel. Wagons were stopped so that children might pick up chips along the trail. While the men worked, women scoured the country for a supply. Windmills might be twenty miles from a house, but wherever cattle gathered for water they left an accumulation justifying the long trip necessary for collecting the chips.

Around corrals and water troughs, the deposits were watched. When one side had dried, they were turned over with sticks so that the other side might be exposed to the sun.

The ending of the war made it possible to buy coal, but most people's resources had been exhausted in buying cottonseed cake, so the cow chip continued to be a prime necessity for existence.

Until 1950 there were still families on isolated ranches who used the primitive fuel. Only after liquid petroleum gas became available, were cow chips used primarily in emergencies.

When people on the Plains have picnics they usually use the cow chip for fuel. Even though they may have portable gasoline stoves, they prefer the cow chip. For that lowly commodity has another great advantage: it is a mosquito repellent superior to any of the commercial type—and it costs nothing!

"WHO'S SELLING THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE NOW?"

By Richard F. Ferguson

NOT LONG AGO I set out to prove there's a market for anything—if it's packaged right—even those odd-shaped little mounds that dotted our great American prairies in years gone by, odd-shaped little mounds that reflected temporary relief for the buffalo and fuel for the fires of pioneers trekking Westward. Call them what you will—buffalo chips, excrement or manure—the point is I proved people will buy anything.

When the challenge first crossed my mind, I contacted a friend whose home is located reasonably close to a midwestern game preserve stocked with a thundering herd of hump-shouldered, hairy-headed American buffaloes. My request was simple. "Please pick up and send me about six good chips."

Several days later a large, un-insured parcel arrived, with a first class letter attached. It read in part, "Having nothing better to do last Sunday I went over to the preserve and gathered up a quantity of chips per your request. Some of them were rain dampened, so I suggest you place them on a cookie sheet and warm them in a 325° oven until they dry out!"

Upon opening the package I found that although carefully wrapped, individually, in old newspapers, the wet chips had crumbled in transit. But the dry ones were intact. They were carefully brushed, varnished and dried, then bedded in delicate white tissue paper.

An artist friend and I worked up package copy and design, based on the famous World War II fighting cry, "Gung Ho!" Only our merchandising plan called for the words to be changed to "Dung Ho!"

The first of our conversation pieces sold on sight to a jeweler who later presented it to the captain of his firm's "last place in the league" bowling team.

The accompanying photograph clearly shows the package and the product. And it all goes to prove that people will buy anything if it is attractively presented—even those little prairie mounds that more or less lost their importance in the late 1880s.

Perhaps it really wasn't "Goodbye Mr. Chips"—and it isn't really a case of *caveat emptor*. No—it's "Dung Ho" and my supply depends only upon my understanding friend and the continued eating habits of the thundering herd!

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Vengeance Riders of The Monte

(Continued from page 33)

the blacksmith shop. After awhile, they began meeting at Nat Vise's place on the edge of town. That's where they met one cold February day when word reached Thompson that a man named Smith had been arrested for horse stealing just east of town. He had been quickly taken into Los Angeles. Within hours The Monte Boys were there. Sentenced to seventy-eight lashes with a horse whip, Smith was chastised by one of The Monte Boys.

Horse stealing was not taken very seriously by the people. And robbery, for some reason, was not considered as serious a crime as horse stealing. Money was plentiful.

Usually a man who broke into a home or warehouse, or who robbed a traveler, was given light punishment. Thrown into a makeshift jail a couple of days, he was held up to ridicule and shame by the townspeople. But murder was different. A killer in The Monte, if and when caught, could be assured of meeting his end within hours, sometimes minutes.

The Turner killing was a case in point. Bill Turner's son, Bill, Jr., was busy one day in his little store near Workman Mills, about three miles from The Monte. A Californian named Romo, who lived at Governor Pio Pico's ranchito, entered and bought some goods, also asking to be shown a pair of boots. Turner stopped to reach for the boots when the stranger drew a pruning-knife across his throat. Turner grabbed at the man's hand, catching hold of the sharp blade with both hands, thereby crippling himself for the rest of his days.

Turner had always been in the habit of closing before dark, because of the rough element nearby; when he didn't return home at the accustomed hour, his young wife, taking her little five-shooter with her, set out to find him and arrived in the midst of the murderous assault. Romo and her wounded husband were wrestling furiously on the floor of the store. Her pistol missed fire, but she managed to pull the assassin away from her husband. He turned on her suddenly, wresting the pistol from her. His one shot killed her instantly.

The gunfire aroused a neighbor who reached the scene after Romo had fled. He found Turner half-conscious and bleeding. Four boots had been taken, all for the left foot—and seventy dollars in cash.

When news of the murder passed swiftly from mouth to mouth in The Monte, a posse of three started out to hunt for Romo. After an unsuccessful two-day search, they gave up the job.

On the third day a youngster rushed into a saloon and yelled excitedly, "I know where the fella is—I know where he is!"

Within minutes most of The Monte Boys were saddling their horses and hurrying to a rendezvous at Vise's place. The party divided into three groups and in time found themselves wading in and out of the San Gabriel River and down Puente Creek. Their quarry was spotted floundering across the stream. Schlesinger, one of the best shots among The Monte Boys, took aim. The culprit screamed, "Don't shoot!" and quickly came ashore. Most of the stolen money was found on him.

The Monte Boys took their captive back to Turner who identified him. When asked why he had robbed Turner, he replied, "I was marrying Sunday and I needed new boots and money for tobacco and things."

During the two days' searching for Romo, Los Angeles officials had heard about the murder and were coming to The Monte to bring the killer back to Los Angeles. Just as they rode up to the Vise place, The Monte Boys lifted Romo onto a horse and dashed off with him in the direction of Puente Valley. Under a tree on the bank of the San Gabriel River they cut Romo's throat—and then he was hanged!

At the first report of a killing, The Monte Boys rode together, capturing the suspect and hanging him without trial, sometimes without a shred of evidence other than accusations.

A FEW DAYS after Christmas of 1856, four storekeepers were murdered by Mexican outlaws who had fled Mexico. They were led by Pancho Daniel, an escaped convict. The efficient Monte Boys quickly pursued the bandits. After two weeks' searching, The Monte Boys found the murderers in the Puente Hills, captured them, and brought them back—this one time (for some unknown reason) returning them to officials of Los Angeles. However, one of the outlaws escaped one week after being taken there, and was found near The Monte. He was shot in the head.

A little later The Monte Boys rounded up three killers and promptly hanged them from the rafters of a livery stable owned by "One-Eye" Quinn. The hanging probably was witnessed by a large crowd of people since Quinn's stables were right in the middle of town, on Main Street.

The time came when The Monte Boys would gallop into town at the slightest hint of a crime. Los Angeles officials came to expect them at every lynching. Stern and relentless, they executed their

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own rough justice in their own chosen way.

Frequently, following a quick hanging, they would ride over to Ira Thompson's stage depot, known as "Willow Groves," and have a big meal accompanied by plenty of whiskey and fast fiddle music.

Such was the occasion following the lynching of a man named Boston Daimwood near Los Angeles. He had killed. The fact that he hadn't even committed his crime in The Monte didn't stop The Monte Boys—they were there anyway, seeing that "justice" was done. They left Daimwood dangling from a limb, and rode over to Willow Groves to enjoy a hearty meal of roast beef and apple cobbler.

As time passed, the number of murders and rape decreased. Apparently The Monte Boys and their methods paid off. Even though the law was still being broken around The Monte every day in some way or another, things quieted down somewhat—although never returning to the peace that The Monte experienced back in 1851 and 1852. Federal authorities began to step in, insisting that criminals be given a fair trial regardless of their crimes.

Ira Thompson had grown fairly wealthy and had even named the town Lexington, after his home town in Kentucky. The new name appeared on several maps printed at the time, but eventually the name faded into disuse.

One by one, members of the notorious Monte Boys gang dropped away, spending most of their days on their farms, or tending their businesses. Some, however, kept riding. Saloon building slowed down and churches and other public edifices appeared.

A couple of years passed, and a tough half-breed named Billy Rowland was appointed sheriff. "Bud" Bryant of The Monte was appointed his deputy for that area. The Monte Boys, once almost as lawless as the worst outlaws, behaved better now. Cuddeback even "got religion" and repented for his part in the hangings. Bill Turner, Sr., died.

And in 1866 old Ira Thompson passed from the scene. A younger man, Bill Dodson, took his place. The population of The Monte that year numbered almost 800 citizens.

The busy little community was called Lexington again by a few folks, The Monte by others, and El Monte by some. Mexican wanderers had passed through town since 1851, camping awhile, working on ranches for a time, and then moving on. They called the town El Monte and the name has stuck to this day.

By 1878 The Monte Boys had become an exciting story that elders told their children. But it was a true story, told by those who had actually lived it.

Little children would sit at the knee of one of The Monte Boys and would hold his big rough hand, probably the very hand that once fitted a noose securely around a murderer's neck. Even today, alert eighty-four-year-old Grace Blackley, still living within a stone's throw of Quinn's livery stable, recalls stories her father, John Broaded, once told her. She figures he must have had his facts pretty straight, for didn't he ride with The Monte Boys many times?

In fact, many grandchildren around El Monte today can look over old family mementoes, gaze at old photographs, and visit the very places where their grandfathers once flung ropes over limbs or rafter timbers to hang men who had killed coldly—men who spoiled the serenity and contentment of the prosperous little town. These descendants have even established a little museum to hold the many relics once owned and used by The Monte Boys.

El Monte lived life to its fullest, but murderers were not tolerated. Killers paid with their own lives—swiftly—and as cruelly as they themselves had killed. The Monte Boys saw to that.

Papa's Straw Hat

(Continued from page 13)

ready spent scarce money for a straw hat, Papa would feel obligated to wear it, rather than spend more for an expensive new felt.

It must have worked out that way, too, because I can remember Papa's putting on the hat. I can remember how ridiculous, how unlike Papa, he appeared under that brown straw, with its pinch-peaked crown and its drooping wide brim.

And I can remember, best of all, how grim and silent and hopping mad he looked as he left the house, headed for the mule lot.

I followed along behind. It was my ambition to break wild mules, like he did, when I got older, and I always liked to hang around to see how he handled the bad ones.

There was only one span of mules in the lot that day, a well-matched pair of big three-year-olds that Papa had brought out of the cedar-brake country around Menard the fall before. They'd been as wild and dangerous as cornered panthers when he first brought them home and they'd fought him with all the viciousness and deadly hate inherent in any animal that has run wild before being captured.

But Papa was a mule man. He knew mule nature and how to bring it under control. Give him time, and he could tame the worst man-killer mule that ever chopped at a man's head with his forefeet. And—which was even more important—he could do it without breaking the mule's spirit. He took special pride in breaking mules to harness without ever one time turning out a "deadhead."

So, by now, some six months later, Papa had this span of mules so gentled that he could go inside the pen, call to them, and often they'd actually come walking right up to him, ready for the bridle.

In fact, Papa always made it a practice to call to his mules any time he entered the corral. He did it this time. The mules couldn't come to him, since each was tied to a hind wheel of the wagon, where they ate corn out of the bed. But it was a sort of greeting to them, a way of letting them know that it was him and not something to get spooked at.

The mules recognized Papa's voice, of course, and neither started at the sound of it nor gave the least hint of surprise. Still calmly munching their corn, they did, however—more or less out of courtesy—lift their heads and flick their long ears in Papa's direction.

And that's when it happened! With the explosive, nerve-shattering violence that only a mule is capable of, both mules fell suddenly to pieces. They snorted and reared high. They fell back against their tie-ropes as if in their terror they meant to tear their heads from their bodies. They bucked and squealed and pawed at the ropes with their forefeet, blasting the air with piercing whistles.

One lost his footing and went down, to roll completely over before lunging up to rear and fight at his rope again. At the same time, his mate made an impossible leap, landed up in the wagon bed with a thundering crash of hoofs against the

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wood, then sprang to the ground on the far side.

Now, with both terrified animals lunging in the same direction, they were able to roll the wagon up on its side. That frightened them even more, so that around the corral they went, backward, dragging the wagon after them, slamming and splintering the hard-oak tongue against a snubbing post, and tearing down upon themselves a section of the harness-shed roof.

ALTOGETHER, it was by far the worst mule scare and smashup Papa had ever allowed to happen in all his years of handling wild mules. And, beyond shouting a futile "Whoa! Whoa, now, mules!" there wasn't a thing he could do about it—other than take the one step necessary to make certain such a thing never happened again.

Papa waited until the mules had jammed the overturned wagon against the fence in such a manner that they could no longer move it. Then he left them there, still stamping and whistling their terror, while he hurried off to the house.

Mama had heard the commotion, of course. She had run out of the kitchen where she was cooking dinner to stand at the backyard gate and wring and twist her apron in her hands. She kept calling to Papa in a voice pitched high with fear, "What is it, Beck? What's scaring the mules?"

Papa wouldn't answer her, so she kept it up till he got close enough for her to see the look on his face. Then she hushed suddenly and stood fearfully back from the gate as he slammed through it, headed for the kitchen.

She followed him as far as the door, where she stood, bracing herself with a hand on each jamb as if afraid to go farther.

She had me blocked off so that I couldn't see, but I recognized the rattle of a cast-iron lid being jerked from the top of the stove. Then I poked my head in past her and was in time to see Papa cramming his wadded-up straw hat into the firebox, stuffing it deeper down into the flame with the lid lifter.

Finally he turned, and I saw then why Mama had stopped at the door. If Papa had been looking at me like that, I'd have turned tail and taken to the brush, worse scared than the mules.

Papa was never one to swear around his womenfolks, but he swore that day there in the kitchen. He said to Mama, "Now, Emma, let's get this straight. I'll just be *damned* if I'll wear a hat that a mule can't stand the sight of!"

Then he went and put on his Sunday hat and left the house to go see about his frightened mules.

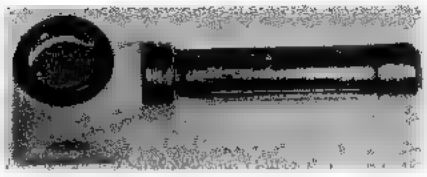
So far as I know, that's the last time Mama ever mentioned the subject of straw hats to Papa—which may be the reason that when he died at the age of sixty-four, there was a little dollar-sized balding spot showing where his black hair crowned at the back of his head.

Eagle

(Continued from page 21)

at which the dog jerked a little in its stupor, but slumbered on. Feverishly, the prospector built a twig fire, and soon the tail was simmering in a pot. The heady aroma of cooking meat roused the sleeping dog. Man and dog devoured the tail, and thus revitalized were able to continue across the snowfields to Dawson.

ON THE same trail, downriver from Eagle at Washington Creek, was a



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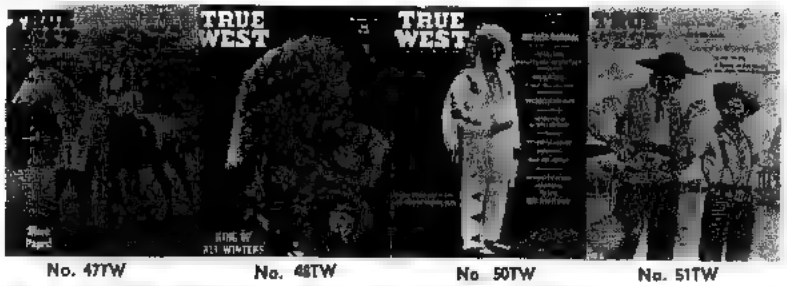

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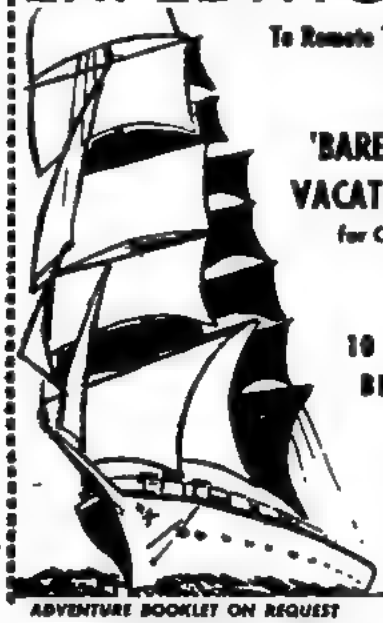

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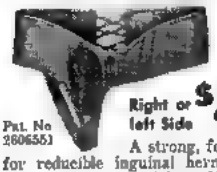

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roadhouse where most winter travelers, as a matter of course, would stop for a meal, a drink, or overnight. But those who endeavored to pass by this establishment without stopping were quickly reprimanded by its eccentric proprietress. She would calmly squeeze out a few rifle shots in front of their sleds. Few ignored such pointed hospitality.

Eagle, today a place where most doorways open into dust, will probably never become completely abandoned. There is an Indian village three miles upriver, whose survival has been insured for the time being by the recent construction of a Bureau of Indian Affairs school there. Then too, Eagle lies at the end of the Taylor Highway, a 150-mile gravel spur connecting to the Alaska Highway at Tetlin Junction. As tourist traffic to Alaska increases, it is probable that more people will begin to drive up the Taylor Highway to the town time forgot on the Yukon. One can even envision the beautiful setting and weathered buildings of Eagle attracting an artist's colony, such as exists in the "ghost city" of Jerome, Arizona.

But were it not for the highway, Eagle's destiny would likely be that of Nation, thirty miles downriver—a roadless town almost hidden from the river by spruce and brush. The paths that once connected the score of log buildings which remain are choked with berry bushes. Bears feed among them in the summer, leaving their tracks beside sheet-metal stoves gone cold for half a century and longer. On some sod roofs, spruce seeds have taken root, and young trees have pushed up as high as a man.

Nation can be readily located on maps; history books speak of its mining and dead dreamers. But to find the town itself, one must know exactly where to look, at which kink of the river to scrutinize the shore for a glimpse of mossy walls between tree trunks. For Nation is now a place of shade and mushrooms—buried by the forest from which it was built.

Monument to Hate

(Continued from page 35)

to the door of his cabin at nightfall, and as he stood outlined against the lamplight inside, shot him down on his doorstep. However, according to a story in the Silver City *Enterprise* of November 3, 1893, someone named J. B. Hoffman swore out a warrant for Wood's arrest, claiming that he distinctly recognized Wood as "one of a party which fired the shot that killed Grudgings. Other shots were fired and other parties were implicated in the killing." Hoffman alleged that Wood wore a headdress made of weeds to hide his identity, but pushed it back and his features were seen. The mask or headdress was said to have been picked up close to the place. Wood was said to have crouched among the weeds, his strange mask being intended as camouflage.

No follow-up of Hoffman's story appeared in the newspaper. Who the "other parties" were, or even who Hoffman was, is left in doubt. If, as Hoffman's statement implies, several men shot at Grudgings, who were they? What had Grudgings done to bring this fight on himself? If it were a group of irate ranchmen gunning for cattle rustlers, Wood might well be included in the posse, but why should he go to the trouble to invent an elaborate disguise, only to push it back and ignore it? No; it is doubtful that anyone else was concerned in this feud. Hoffman's story must have been a play for the limelight by a crank who wanted to feel important with his name in the paper.

Wood himself told Henry Woodrow, years later, that he got down in a willow thicket just below the Grudgings' cabin and waited until along in the evening when the brothers came riding up the road. Wood cut down on Bill Grudgings without warning, as Charley Wood had been murdered, and killed him instantly. Tom Grudgings lay on the other side of his horse like an Indian and escaped, although Wood fired at him several times. Wood then rode, straight and proud and stern of face, into Cooney, the nearest town, and gave himself up.

According to a story in the *Enterprise*, he was bound over to the grand jury for trial. As he walked out in the custody of the deputy sheriff, a well-known badman and killer of the area, a half-Cherokee named Barrett, stepped up and said, "I'll take care of this man till morning." He then walked away with Wood. No explanation is given for the ease with which the prisoner was delivered, although a gun in Barrett's hand would have been reason enough. He accompanied Wood a short distance up a canyon and told him to "skip."

Wood needed no second word, and left the area. Barrett, returning, almost immediately killed a man named Albert Evans, apparently in cold blood, mounted his horse and rode away. It seemed as though even a red-handed killer sympathized with this father whose child had been so wantonly slain. The excitement caused by Evans' killing diverted attention from Wood, and it appears that no move was made to apprehend him.

BACK in those days of difficult transportation, everything that reached the ranches along the forks of the upper Gila was brought in on the backs of mules or burros. The billiard tables, the piano, even the handsome, long plate-glass mirrors with their carved and gilded Florentine frames that once graced the Lyons Hunting Lodge on the East Fork, were packed out there on muleback. So it was that a mule one day brought out an equally unusual load, the marble tombstone that still stands over the grave of William Grudgings, "waylayed and murdered by Tom Wood."

Who caused it to be placed there, no one now knows, but there must have been a rankling hate among the Grudgings family, whoever and wherever they were. They wanted to shout to the small world that passed by the stone, that all the murders were not on one side.

That is not the end of the story. Wood told Henry Woodrow that he followed Tom Grudgings to Louisiana, where he had gone after the shooting. It was not easy to locate him, but one evening Wood was told that a man of Grudgings' description generally crossed the river at daylight in a canoe. Wood waited in the nearby canebrake, and sure enough a man walked toward the canoe, spitting as he did so through a gap in his teeth—a well-remembered habit of Tom Grudgings. To be sure that he had his man, Wood sang out, "Hello Tom!"

The man turned, recognized Wood and threw up his hands. Wood shot him then, and the old feud died with him.

After hiding out in the mountains for a couple of years, Wood came back to Silver City, stood trial, and came clear. He lived in Grant County for a good many years after that, this inconspicuous, quiet citizen with fourteen notches on his gun, and finally died in his bed.

ELECTRONIC RE DUCTION P

My Friend, Crazy Horse

(Continued from page 45)

all their finery, the warriors followed by their families and possessions in the new wagons the Government had issued them.

It was a sight never to be forgotten. I remember one bystander exclaiming, "It looks more like a victory parade than a surrender."

By the spring of 1877 most of the settlers had returned to their homesteads to start anew. We were fortunate. Everything was just as we had left it. The Indians had not damaged or burned anything.

On September 5, 1877, I made a deal with the Indian Agent for him to purchase my surplus corn. That was the date Crazy Horse had returned to the Agency from a visit to the Spotted Tail Agency. The officials in charge were not present and Crazy Horse was put into the guardhouse. We heard his shout and the commotion of struggle and ran to the guardhouse. Apparently Crazy Horse, seeing the bars, had whirled and attacked his guards and, in turn, had been mortally wounded by a soldier's bayonet.

The dying chief tightly grasped the agent's hand and spoke a few sentences in his own language, then his eyes, with a look of recognition, turned toward me. Here was the man we had saved during the storm!

The next morning, on my way home, I overtook an old Indian leading a warrior's horse pulling a travois on which lay Crazy Horse. I followed them to an open grave some wild ones had dug. There was no wailing, just waiting. If anyone noticed me they gave no sign of it.

As the body was lowered into the grave, the chief of the wild ones took tobacco leaves from a buckskin pouch, broke them into bits and scattered them into the grave.

Still ignoring me, they left. The wild ones melted into the wilderness, the parents returned to the reservation, and I went to my home in peace. At last I knew why our home had been spared by the Indians. We had shared our humble dwelling with their chief, the greatest of all Sioux, Crazy Horse.

Justice After Dark

(Continued from page 20)

in this manner, they have now taken up arms in defense of their lives and property, as a last resort, having received no redress nor encouragement by law, both parties going in squads, serious trouble is hourly expected . . . . ."

Van Riper was sure the lives of many, including his own, were in danger, that his reports were being tampered with in the post office, and that if something were not done about it very soon the whole country would be "the scene of blackening crimes horrible to think of."

Lieutenant Campbell, on his way to another station after his company had been discharged, sent off a letter to Major Jones the following day, June 16, from Fort Griffin. He recounted killings and disappearances, which had gone before, and described the situation at the moment: "There are about sixteen men in the Lauren and Sellman party," he said, "armed with shotguns and improved cartridge guns, the Grangers, as they are called, have taken up arms in self defense for the protection of lives and property . . . . I could give you some names of parties and prove to you that they are into things that is not right in this country, that would make you almost shudder at the thought of such in the standing that they are of being in such business. I only keep back names for self protection but will put you on the track . . . . There was no bill against those parties that killed all of those cattle. WHY because the majority of the officers in the County who is and has been into a secret organization who was sworn to stand up to whatever was done by any of his party, and there was at one time about eighty of them . . . ."

THE ONLY good thing about the Shackleford County feud was the fact that it did not last long. Seven days after Lieutenant Campbell wrote his letter, it was all over in a burst of gunsmoke.

On Saturday night, June 22, Sheriff Cruger got together a posse of eight men and went out to arrest Larn. It was a ticklish assignment for him. Larn was a dead shot and as fearless as a man can be made. Furthermore he was bitter and resentful about what he considered the persecution he had been enduring, and they knew he was bound to make a fight. The sheriff and his posse were mighty thoughtful as they rode out of town, and pretty sure that a number of them likely would not come back.

But luck was with them this time. They surrounded Larn's house that night. It would have been useless to approach it in the daytime, for he had a lookout post in a cupola on top and they would have been detected long before their arrival.

About daybreak Larn himself came out to do the morning milking. Leaving the rest of his posse out of sight, Sheriff Cruger took Ben Reynolds and Dave Barker with him into the corral and made the arrest as easily as saying, "Good morning!"

Some say it was so simple because Larn had left his gun in the house for the first time in history. Others think he had unbuckled his belt and hung it on the fence out of reach. Ben Reynolds used to say that Larn simply turned over his pistol when Cruger said he had a warrant for him. When he saw that the warrant was from Albany he did say he wished he hadn't surrendered, and that may be the basis for the tale which says he offered Cruger $500 to give him a gun and let him fight it out. It was also rumored that he asked if he might go back to the house for a minute and remarked, when his request was refused, that he would have killed everyone of them if it had been granted. These stories sound a little too lurid to be true.

Old people at Albany remember that he was afraid of being mobbed on the way to town and insisted that his wife and child accompany him, so Mrs. Larn and their boy Will came along in a buggy. They passed through Griffin and arrived safely in Albany where Larn was shackled, with several other prisoners, to a staple in the wall over the fireplace of a private house which was being used as a jail. Meanwhile Mary Larn had picked up a lawyer—as if a lawyer would do any good in a case like that.

According to his own story, Edgar Rye, justice of the peace for that precinct, was approached by Mrs. Larn and her lawyer, John W. Wray, in an attempt to get a hearing and have bail granted. They even offered to post a bond of $1,200 if he would let them guard the prisoner in the hotel. Rye refused. He says a member of the vigilante committee was listening at a crack in the wall and later told him he would have been killed if he had done anything for the protection of the prisoner. He goes on to tell a romantic tale of a race between two bands of men—

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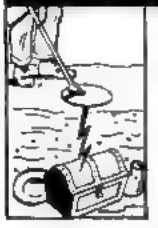

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Larn's friends under Selman and the vigilantes—the vigilantes arriving first.

JOHN POE, the town marshal at Griffin, was on guard. Poe went west shortly after this episode, settling in Roswell where he served as a peace officer and became a successful banker. He was with Pat Garrett at the time Billy the Kid was killed and wrote a little book about that happy event. In Albany he was called on often to help the sheriff, as on this particular evening. At twelve o'clock, when he was about to go off guard, the vigilantes seized him, took his weapons, and captured the makeshift jail.

Larn stood up when they came in and looked at them out of his fierce, dark eyes. The other prisoners rolled over on their stomachs and hid their faces so they would not recognize anybody.

There was very little conversation. The leader of the vigilantes told Larn why they had come and asked if he had anything to say.

"Not to you bunch of cowardly murderers," he replied. "But if you'll turn me loose and give me a forty-five, I'll fight your whole outfit." Seeing that this sort of talk was getting him nowhere, he looked them in the eye and said, "Go ahead. I'll take my medicine."

Eleven men lined up and fired a volley which killed him instantly.

His wife, waiting up in the hotel for what she was afraid might happen, heard the shots and realized that she was a widow.

According to the Rye account, Selman's men were reconnoitering for their own assault when the guns went off. Realizing that it was all over, Selman skipped out and kept ahead of the sheriff until the posse gave out. He headed for Fort Sumner and the wilds of New Mexico where he lay low for a while. In May of 1880, he was back in circulation again, turning up in the neighborhood of Fort Davis with the Jesse Evans gang.

On June 14, Sergeant L. B. Caruthers wrote to Major Jones from Fort Davis: "I find that the band numbered some twenty men last year, and that they have their agents here and in Stockton, their agent here is Capt. Tyson, his real name is John Selman. . . . I think from what I can learn that he is chief of the gang and as he was getting very scary, I had him appointed Deputy sheriff and jailor as the jailor has just resigned." On June 22, Caruthers telegraphed that he had arrested Selman, who had offered to give his gang away, and did turn over a list of men in the Shackleford County mob.

Selman's arrest was a considerable embarrassment to the men of Shackleford. The Rangers wanted to bring him back, but Sheriff Cruger wanted to keep him away as far as possible. He wrote to Major Jones that he could not answer for Selman's life if he returned, and surmised that "the indictments are probably found in order to keep him out of the County as he is such a great thief and scoundrel and withal so sharp that he can not be caught in his rascality." A conviction, he feared, would be hard to get, and if the charges were not sustained, there might be "a renewal of the times we have passed through."

The Rangers nevertheless brought Selman back, holding him in jail at Comanche until court time. What happened next is not a matter of record, but Mr. Henry C. Herron of Albany used to tell about it. Selman was lodged in the Albany jail with nine indictments against him. One day the sheriff said he was going to take him over to Griffin to see if he could raise bail. Deputy Herron asked, "Do you want me to take him?"

"No," said Sheriff Cruger. "I want you to go out to Fort Phantom Hill with some papers."

Herron saw what was going on and made no further suggestions. A man named Shailes was deputized specially, and rode over to Griffin with Selman. They went into one of the Griffin stores. Pretty soon Selman asked to go outside, and he and Shailes stepped out behind. In the back yard Shailes fired off his gun a few times and Selman disappeared. "Escaped" is hardly the word for it. He dropped out of sight for a few years but turned up in El Paso in the Nineties, old enough to be "Uncle John" Selman to boys like Owen White but still man enough to shoot John Wesley Hardin when they got into an argument. His own turn came very soon after that.

Long before Selman went over the horizon for the last time, the feud was dead. Lieutenant Arrington wrote to Major Jones on August 31, 1878: "I have conversed with quite a number of the good citizens and find everything quiet and from what I can glean I am satisfied that at one time nearly everybody belonged to the mob—but the good men are now satisfied that law and order can be maintained without lynch law and the extremists, the smart young men like it, from so much experience in the business—and they want to hold on to the substantial men as backers.

"However, I think by a mild course, first gaining the confidence of the masses, everything will work well."

It did. But when Mary Larn died in 1947, she was still unreconciled. A year before her end she wrote back to Albany to have her husband's grave furbished up. Through all those years she blamed some of her own closest relatives for what had happened and she never once admitted that Larn deserved what he got.

One wonders sometimes if she may not have been more than half-right.

Robert W. Service—Bard of the North

(Continued from page 43)

except for *The Trail of '98*. His list of novels is as follows: *The Trail of '98*, 1910; *The Pretender*, 1914; *Poisoned Paradise*, 1922; *The Roughneck*, 1923; *The Master of the Microbe*, 1926; *The House of Fear*, 1927.

One day Service was asked by his publishers to write an autobiography. This he did in a book called *Ploughman of the Moon*, a title Service took from a couplet of Verlaine:

Pedlar of dream-stuff, piping an empty tune;
Fisher of shadows, Ploughman of the Moon.

Ploughman of the Moon is the story of Service's life up to 1912; in 1948 he published an account of his life from 1912 calling it *Harper of Heaven*, although he had earlier announced it would be titled "Blue-Behinded Ape," after a phrase in a Baudelaire verse.

Robert W. Service, "Bard of the North," is to this author's mind the greatest poet, living or dead, even though his works are seldom found in either high school or college textbooks. The poet, Witter Byner, once observed: "Robert W. Service has been a poetic phenomenon. More or less ignored by the critics, he has won a vast following. And it seems to me time for a fellow-craftsman to protest, that in this case, the public is right. . . ."

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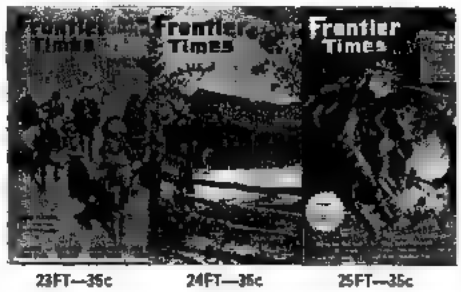

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

"MAN AND BIRD MAN"

It was about a quarter of a century ago that this reviewer spent a memorable evening with Bob More at his office-museum in Vernon, Texas. He showed me his tremendous collection of bird eggs and told some good stories about cowmen he knew. On learning that my dad had run a few cows in Wilbarger County in the Nineties he started to dig among his books and papers. He found what he was looking for—Ross and Rouse's *Early Day History of Wilbarger County* (Vernon, 1933), and while looking for it came across Milt Good's *Twelve Years in a Texas Prison* (Amarillo, 1935). He gave me both volumes and waved aside my thanks. Naturally, I was interested and pleased when J. Frank Dobie sent me a copy of his delightful booklet, reprinted from the autumn 1941 issue of *Southwest Review*, about Bob. The supply of this first separate printing was soon exhausted and it became one of the scarcest of all Dobie booklets.

Bob More, Man and Bird Man (The Encino Press, 1510 Forest Trail, Austin, Texas 78703, $7.50) is a reprint of that Dobie booklet in a handsome format. The binding is cloth with a title label on the front cover and the edition consists of 550 numbered copies, each in a light cardboard slipcase. There is an introduction by Bill Wittliff, the publisher, that tells of his contacts with Dobie. This is the first volume in the "Southwestern Profiles" series and if the others are as well done as this one, Bill is due a long run.

RANGE LIFE

Martha Downer Ellis' *Bell Ranch Recollections* (Clarendon Press, Clarendon, Texas, $5.00) is the third in her series about the Bell. She persuaded many of the old-time employees of the ranch to write down their memories of it. This, then, is the Bell in the eyes and minds of its own cowboys. Mrs. Ellis even got her husband, George, the present manager, to write of the Bell as it was in 1944 when he came there as assistant to Albert Mitchell. The book is illustrated with many old photos and with a number of drawings by Robert E. Lougheed. The edition is small and the printing and binding eminently satisfactory. Worthwhile.

If you are fortunate enough to own one of the thirty-five copies of a book, there is usually an interesting story tied to its acquisition. This reviewer does and there is. In November, 1948, along with two avid collectors of range books, he was driving from San Antonio to San Angelo and it seemed aoppropriate for us to pay our respects to an old friend, J. Marvin Hunter, at his museum in Bandera. He allowed us to browse through the books in the museum and this reviewer discovered that J. Marvin owned *two* of the thirty-five copies that had been printed of James F. Hinkle's *Early Days of a Cowboy on the Pecos* (Roswell, 1937). In answer to a query, J. Marvin told this reviewer that the books in the museum were not for sale but as an afterthought said that if there were two copies of any he would be willing to part with one of them. When your reviewer laid out the two copies of Jim Hinkle's cowboy memoirs, J. Marvin named a nominal sum and the deal was quickly made.

A couple of open-mouthed cow-book collectors witnessed the transaction and their mouths were open most of the way to San Angelo explaining why one or the other of them should take over my deal—a small profit may even have been mentioned. So far as is known neither of them ever secured a copy. They have the opportunity now to acquire a much more attractive edition. Jack Rittenhouse has just reissued *Early Days of a Cowboy on the Pecos* at his Stagecoach Press (P. O. Box 921, Santa Fe, N. M. 87501) at the very reasonable price of $4.95. The edition consists of 550 copies in cloth and there is an informative introduction by erudite William S. Wallace of the Rodgers Library, New Mexico Highlands University. Hinkle's booklet was not only rare but one of the best accounts of cowboy life ever published. It now has the format it deserves. Recommended.

Cattle Kings of The Staked Plains (Sage Books, $4.00) is the second, revised edition of the book by George A. Wallis first published in 1957. The first edition promptly sold out. It was serialized by chapters in *True West* during the spring and summer of 1964. The Staked Plains, or the Llano Estacado of the Spaniards, is the setting for the cattlemen and cowboys pictured in this volume. The vast cow pasture of northeastern New Mexico and Northwestern Texas produced the largest ranches and the most colorful cow-country people known. While complete volumes have been written about several of the ranches mentioned by Wallis, the personal stories of individuals as told by him are what really make this book. Those who missed out on the first edition will want to take advantage of this opportunity.

TALES OF THE OLD-TIMERS

Harriett Farnsworh, an energetic writer, has traveled around collecting the experiences of the last of the old-time westerners. These assorted tales have become chapters in her book *Remnants of the Old West* (Naylor $2.95). Most of her characters are desert rats, a hardy race living close to nature. Some of these aging citizens live in the ghost towns of the Mojave Desert, Death Valley and mining towns of Arizona. There are several kicks in the story about "Nettie of the Greenhorn." Nettie is a native of Kernville, California, the site of Whiskey Flat of the Gold Rush Days. Her famous eighteen-course dinner brought her a spot on the "Believe it or Not" program. But her home remedies are really something to hoot about and you must read the book for descriptions of Angleworm Oil, Nanny-berry tea, Wizard oil and Chamber Lye. Certainly the cures were worse than the maladies they were supposed to cure.

The author dedicated a chapter to one of our most neglected servants, the burro. There are, we learn, many monuments to men but the one at Fairplay, Colorado, for the faithful pack animal, Prunes, is the only one for a burro.

MEN OF VIOLENCE

A Directory of New Mexico Desperados (The Press of the Territorian, $1.00) compiled by Peter Hertzog is Number 5 in The Series of Western Americana. From Adamson, Carl to Zamora, Francisco this list covers some six hundred men of violence. A line or so is added to each name by way of identification and the reason why the name came down in history. As "Pete" says, "Above all, enjoy thumbing through this work. You might find a relative hitherto lost in limbo." Although the compiler admits to the possibilities of mistakes, this is a real bargain for enjoyment or for reference.

GHOST TOWNS

Ghost Towns and How to Get to Them (The Press of the Territorian, $1.00) by Betty Woods with maps by M. T. Williams is Number 4 of The Series of Western Americana. This is a great big bundle in a small package—brief but interesting histories and descriptions of New Mexico's ghostly ghost towns. Simple location maps of each town makes this a "must" accessory for any Western buff traveling in New Mexico. When riches of silver and gold and other minerals were found by a lucky few, wild stories soon drew hordes of treasure seekers, some looking for silver, some for high wages or business enterprises. "Crumbling adobe walls, greasewood living well on Main Street, a mail box hanging on hopefully, desolation in the little church, decaying chimneys, hand chiseled gravestones"—all tell the ghostly story of the past. Whether traveling in New Mexico, or relaxing in your easy chair at home, this little booklet is a ticket for an interesting venture into the past.

Backward through a Bottle (Privately printed by the author, 8945 E. Twentieth, Tucson, Arizona, $2.00) is an interesting account of Kay Devner's exploring of Spanish ghost towns. She reasons that the bottles and other relics that she finds reveal some of the ways of life in pioneer days—certainly a sound asumption. The railroad towns along the SP, some mining towns in southern Arizona and a homestead all yielded their treasures. Mrs. Devner also visited Mogollon, New Mexico. The booklet is enhanced with photos and with numerous drawings of bottles and other small antiques and with a bibliography.

HISTORY AS YOU LIKE IT!

Fortunately for western history fans, the University of Oklahoma Press has reprinted Percival G. Lowe's *Five Years A Dragoon* ($5.95). Long out of print and almost unknown since it was published in 1906, the new issue will give many readers a valid source of information about early military operations. Lowe participated only in a few battles, but won major honors in the army transportation department. He handled the trans-

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portation detail that built Fort Riley; he freighted supplies for troops that saw action in bleeding Kansas, Cheyenne Indian campaigns and the Mormon War. Lowe made the Pikes Peak Gold Rush and became a Denver merchant. Later he moved to Leavenworth, Kansas, where he was president of the city council, later sheriff and then state senator. A skilled quartermaster, his discussion on army transportation is a solid contribution to the subject. Chicago Westerner Don Russell's introduction helps evaluate the text and puts army breveting into focus. There are several good pictures of army brass, forts and early Kansas scenes. Recommended.

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS, OCTOBER 23, 1962 SECTION 4369, TITLE 39, UNITED STATES CODE SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION OF TRUE WEST, published bi-monthly in Austin, Texas. Location of Publication and General Business Offices: 1012 Edgecliff Terrace, Austin, Travis County, Texas 78704, Publisher, Joe Austell Small, 2405 Briargrove, Austin, Texas. Editor: Pat Wagner, 706 Rio Grande, Austin, Texas. Managing Editor: None. Owner: Western Publications, Inc., 1012 Edgecliff Terrace, Austin, Texas; Joe Austell Small, sole shareholder. Average number of copies printed during last twelve months: 294,833; total copies printed last single issue: 285,000. Average number of sales during last twelve months through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 162 047; sales for last single issue through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 156 580. Average paid circulation during last twelve months, mail subscriptions: 26,854; paid circulation, mail subscriptions, last single issue: 26,780. Average total paid circulation during last twelve months 188,901, total paid circulation last single issue: 183,360. Average free distribution during last twelve months: 1,000; free distribution last single issue: 1,000. Average total distribution during last twelve months: 189,901; total distribution last single issue: 184,360. Average number during last twelve months unaccounted, office use, left over, spoiled after printing: 104,932; total number last single issue unaccounted, office use, left over, spoiled after printing: 100,640. (Signed) Pat Wagner, September 28, 1965.

Honor to the Brave

(Continued from page 29)

Rimming out, too, the rider headed west across mountainous country to the Aqua Fria. There he picked up the trail of the two northbound savages. About ten miles north of Townsend's farm the tracks left the river toward the northwest.

The pursuer's investigation caused him to conclude his scattered quarry planned to meet at Dripping Spring (about three miles west of today's Cordes, Arizona). Having ridden some twenty-five miles over rather rough country, Townsend decided to rest.

Both man and beast drank from the river and then disappeared into a mesquite thicket. There Townsend dismounted. Pulling his rifle from its scabbard, he left the horse saddled but loosened the girth. Then he hobbled him and removed the bridle. The sorrel immediately started feeding on mesquite beans.

From this point on, what happened to Townsend is a matter of probability. The trail itself provided a few clues and the man's own consistent *modus operandi* provided others.

Selecting a position commanding a view of his back trail, he lay down using his rolled-up coat for a pillow and his hat for an eyeshade. Within reach was the Henry.

Remaining close to his master, Jerry fed on beans for a couple of hours. Occasionally he stopped to look and listen. After satisfying his hunger, the animal stood dozing beside the sleeping man.

Awakening at dusk, Townsend bridled Jerry and then removed saddle and hobbles. Using a rough stick, he carefully curried the animal's back. Inspecting shoes and hoofs, he then looked at Jerry's legs. Last, the horse was checked for cactus thorns. After several minutes spent in examination of weapons, Townsend resaddled Jerry.

The solitary rider emerged from the thicket after dark. Watering his horse at the river, he headed northwest.

Three hours later Townsend descended the west slope of a hill into a deep valley some five miles in diameter. On reaching the valley floor he dismounted to wait for moonset which was due early in the morning.

He was in the saddle again before the morning star appeared on September 17, 1873.

Pulling the rifle from the scabbard, he cradled it on his right arm (Townsend was left-handed). Then he rode northwest across the dark valley.

Progressing at a slow walk, he avoided loose rocks, tall grass and brush. Frequently he halted while both horse and rider remained motionless, listening. Arriving at the north side of the valley, Townsend started up the canyon in which Dripping Spring is located. It was very dark in the canyon. A gentle north breeze stirred the rider's black beard. (Some documents indicate Townsend was killed September 16, 1873. The author is of the opinion he was killed shortly before daylight on September 17. Cool air comes down into the lower elevations early in the morning in arid climates. Townsend would have taken advantage of this fact to prevent the Indians from detecting his approach to Dripping Spring.)

The man's degree of alertness seemed unchanged; however, the horse's conduct now reflected awareness of imminent danger. Constantly moving his ears, he sought the slightest sound. Looking at

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every bush and rock, Jerry's nostrils expanded and contracted seeking Indian odor. He walked as quietly as possible.

They approached the spring. Holding the gun halfway to his shouldier, Townsend's left hand was on the small of the stock, his right on the hand guard.

Smelling Indian, Jerry stopped. Man and beast discovered the guard the same instant the guard discovered them. Pursuer and pursued exchanged shots. Then several Indians opened up. Sitting astride his stallion, Townsend returned their fire.

He was startled by the back of his head coming into smart contact with the ground. Turning on his stomach, he saw Jerry backing down the canyon, snorting.

"The horse threw me," he thought.

Suddenly Townsend was seized with nausea as blood gushed from his mouth and the realization came that he hadn't been thrown, he'd been shot. Feeling weak, he laid his head on the ground to wait for the spell to pass.

Stopping fifty feet from his master, Jerry stood trembling and snorting softly. At intervals his master's arms and legs twitched convulsively. Then after a while he became still.

The Apaches had run away after firing a few shots, and in spite of his training, Jerry wanted to run too.

At daybreak, head down and ears forward, Jerry approached his master. The odor of blood had given way to the odor of death. Rapidly backing a few feet, Jerry stood watching the still form of Townsend.

After waiting near the body all day, his thirst became stronger than his fear of Indians. He went to the spring.

Cornhusks were scattered about. Indian scent was strong on camp impedimenta the Apaches had abandoned in their flight. Drinking hurriedly, Jerry ran from the spring.

He resumed his lonely vigil by the corpse. No one came by the morning of the third day, so Jerry started home, a distance of some fifteen miles.

Following the stallion's back trail, neighbors found John Townsend's decomposing body on the fourth day after his death. Clothing and weapons were with the body, which had not been mutilated. Evidence at Dripping Spring showed the Indians didn't realize they had killed their old enemy and they didn't tarry to find out.

John Benjamin Townsend was buried at the scene of his last fight. Later the remains were removed to the Masonic Cemetery at Prescott.

Selling the ranch after John's death, Elizabeth moved to Prescott, and there Townsend's sixth child, John B., was born on March 9, 1874.

After several years of widowhood, Elizabeth married Meredith Aldridge. Elizabeth Townsend-Aldridge died at Prescott on January 30, 1903.

Walt Coburn's Tally Book

(Continued from page 17)

to hide the ugly scar. He lifted the black patch to show me. It had once been a clean white patch but the sweat and dust of many years had blackened it.

Charlie was a halfbreed, the son of a pioneer squawman who was one of the finest educated men who ever crossed the frontier. Charlie had gone to college at Princeton. Time had been when they were one of the wealthiest cattle people in Montana Territory. The winter of '86-'87 had wiped them out. Charlie had a little outfit of his own on the Missouri

River and some cattle left in his brand, a nest egg against old age. Meanwhile, he punched cows for forty a month and like all cowhands blew in his pay whenever the outfit got to town.

During the years that I was in Montana, Charlie and I had some good times together in town and shared many a lonesome day and all the hardships and discomforts and sunshine that a cowhand's life holds. On roundups, at the home ranch, in line camps.

He had a keen sense of humor and a vast understanding. Charlie was always close to the earth, and earthy, but always his head was in the stars. He was content and happy and he had a way with a horse. He was one of the best all-around cowhands in the country. He could have been wagon boss of any big outfit, but he wanted no responsibility.

I wish I had one half what halfbreed Charlie was born with. There are no words to describe it. That part of Montana must be lonely without him for he passed away a few years back. Those old cowhands who have ridden on ahead of him must have had a welcome for Dead Eye Charlie in their camp in the Shadow Hills.

Violence—Spawn of Raw Gold

(Continued from page 41)

emies together face to face again. McKenney did not appear; he had jumped bail and left town, forfeiting the bonds which had been put up for him.

On April 19, Ed Lyon was freed from the trumped-up charge that had brought him so close to death.

At first, Vinson pleaded "not guilty" to the two charges against him, "Indictment for Assault with Intent to Commit Murder, and Indictment for Resisting an Officer," but on April 22 changed his plea to "guilty as charged." Judge James B. Hays sentenced him to fourteen years in the Territorial prison, but in the same book of court records for that year there is another entry bearing Vinson's name and the indictments against him. It reads: "Sep't. 20, 1887. Now on the motion of the District Attorney John McDonald Esq. that the above named cause against said defendant in an indictment heretofore found be dismissed. It is therefore ordered that the case be and hereby is dismissed." Vinson was free.

CHIP EVANS was charged with the murder of Magee and, of course, entered a plea of "not guilty." His trial went on for several days during which time George Cronkrite, Henry Smith, Lyons and others testified against him. On April 21, the jury found him guilty of murder

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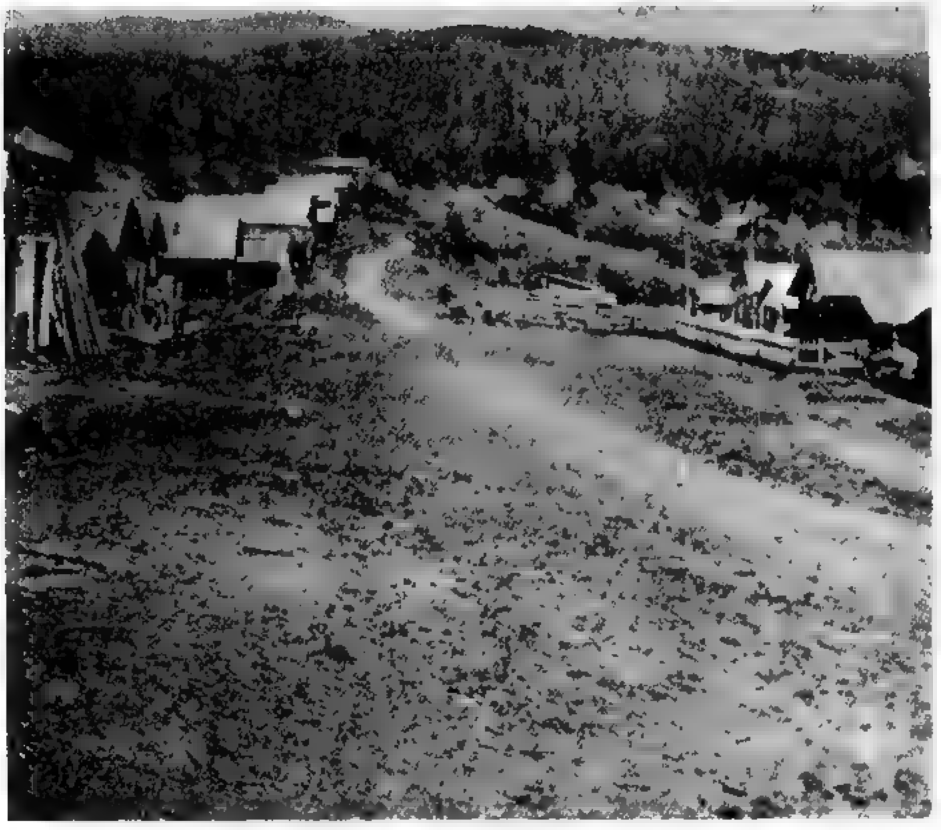

Leesburg, Idaho, where gold was discovered in 1866, was already becoming a ghost town at the turn of the century. Miners seeking richer fields spread out into adjoining regions, founding other camps and towns. Some were rather long-lived, while others, such as Dynamo, died quickly.

in the second degree as charged, but on April 26 he asked for a new trial because of "misdirection of jury." Judge Hays denied his request and sentenced him to be "imprisoned and kept at hard labor in the Territorial prison of the Territory of Idaho for the term of his natural life."

Mrs. Elizabeth Reed, daughter of the prosecuting attorney, John McDonald, states that as long as her father was alive he refused to sign a release from prison for Chip; after his death, the prisoner was eventually turned loose.

It is said that freedom brought no peace to any of the four men involved in the vicious murder attempt. Lyon's black hate drove him relentlessly, searching far and wide for his would-be assassins. According to reports, Lyon found McKenney in Mexico and killed him; caught up with Vinson in Arizona and killed him; and after many years, finally meted out revenge to Chip in Butte, Montana.

Yet Lyon's hatred hadn't completely burned itself out. In his book there was yet one man who deserved to die, and Lyon headed for Salmon City to settle his account with Sam Young, the undersheriff who hadn't lifted a hand to help him. That trip was in vain because the Grim Reaper had cheated him of his last victim—Sam Young was already dead.

It was finished. Lyon slipped quietly away, and no one in Salmon City ever saw him again.

Old Town Nara Visa

(Continued from page 31)

books, the files, a typewriter and Editor Crain's socks. Two dogs were burned in this building.

"Gragg & Felix saved the greater part of the fixtures in their barber shop. The blocks—and enough round steak for breakfast—were saved from the butcher shop."

This terrible tragedy brought an end to the boom in Nara Visa. Although people immediately began to rebuild their businesses, the town never grew to the same size as before. The big county fairs were gone—the big dances gone. Many people from Illinois and Indiana who had come here to file on 160 acres and homestead didn't prove out in three years. There were hardships these people didn't foresee. Some were starved out; many knew nothing of farming or cattle. Crumbling houses and barns started to dot the horizon.

New Mexico joined the Union in 1912 and progress went on everywhere in the United States except in Nara Visa, New Mexico. Slowly through the years it dwindled down to a very small town. Only the post office, Burns Hardware and Lumber Company, two small grocery stores, a few service stations, our Gunsmoke Bar and the Bottle Wranglers Headquarters remain. It is a modern-day ghost town compared to the rip-roaring, wonderfully wild, western frontier town it was in the early 1900s. The only trace of the "Biggest Little Cowtown in New Mexico" remains in the minds of the few old-timers who lived here when Nara Visa was going strong.

I Knew Them All

(Continued from page 16)

did not have what Blue Jay had. Steamboat was renowned as a bucking horse. He was foaled on the Two Bar Ranch in Wyoming in 1901 and gained his reputation by bucking off the ranch hands. In 1905 C. B. Irwin bought him and in

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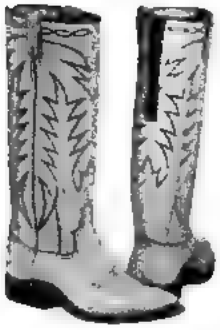

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Around about the year, 1913, Henry Webb rode him again but the greatest ride ever made on Steamboat, when the horse was at his best, was made by Clayton Danks. Danks rode him a number of times. The records show that in 1907 Danks won the World's Championship by riding Steamboat. He also rode him in 1906, and in 1909 Danks won the Championship at Cheyenne. Old Steamboat was shot and killed in 1914 and dragged to the dumps and not, as his publicity goes, to Frontier Park where he was said to have been buried.

ANOTHER great bucking horse was Tipperary. He was second only to Blue Jay. The Black Hills Roundup at Belle Fourche, South Dakota, was my favorite rodeo. I guess I called it my favorite rodeo because I won several of the events and also clowned the show. Tipperary was owned by Charlie Wilson, of Buffalo, South Dakota, in 1918.

I saw Sam Brownell, a superb bronc rider, ride Tipperary. Unless my memory fails me, a lot of money was bet on the horse and also on Sam. For some reason unknown to me, the announcer, Fog Horn Clancy, called out that all bets were off. I remember when Tipperary was led into the area and turned over to the "snubbing" horse. He was a very beautiful bay horse and looked as though he wanted to show himself to the huge crowd. I had my clown make-up on and went over to look at the saddle that Sam was about to put on Tipperary. I noted that it was a freak saddle, a very short tree with approximately a five-inch high cantle, very much concaved. It had a narrow seat and a high front and about a fourteen-inch swell fork that had been cut under his legs. The horn was high and wrapped. It was not a double-rigged saddle but more of a center-rigged, with a very wide cinch, and it had ox bow stirrups. He had a pair of good strong leather reins.

Don't get me wrong, now, Sam Brownell was not the type of man that would intentionally cheat at anything. It was my opinion, however, that any horse would be cheated with a saddle of that kind. Sam put up what I called a good ride. He did a good job of spurring. Tipperary, I'd say, pitched for at least a thousand feet before he "upped" with his head at the sound of the judge's six-shooter. For some reason it was a "disqualify" ride though I thought a good one. But I was the clown and not the judge!

The next year Sam Brownell was the arena director. Before Sam's ride (about six months or a year before) Rufus Rollen rode Tipperary on a bet but I understand the horse was crippled from a cut on one of his heels.

In 1920 at Belle Fourche I saw Yakima Canutt ride Tipperary but the judges did not see, as I did, that Yak lost his right stirrup. It had been raining and the horse slipped; at that moment Yak lost the stirrup.

When I clowned the show there in 1919 I saw Leonard Stroud ride at Tipperary. Just when Stroud was being bucked off, he jumped from the saddle, landing on his feet and holding one of the reins. Tipperary was ridden by a lot of good boys. Among them, besides the aforementioned, were Oklahoma Curly Roberts (the hardest of them all to buck off), Ted McCrorey, Louis Shangure, both the Rosenthal boys and Harold Eckerg.

I rode Tip Top at Belle Fourche; he was the running mate of Tipperary. That was the first year they used shotgun chutes. I had on only a pair of Indian moccasins and what a ride it was! In 1932 Tipperary and Tip Top met up with a big snow blizzard and never survived.

Peter Welch came out of Canada in 1925 with his great string of bucking horses and showed at the Fairgrounds in Columbus, Ohio. It was there that I took a seat at the fabulous and magnificent horse, Midnight. I lost my seat, but the next day Hugh Strickland rode him. Almost anyone who has ever seen or heard of a rodeo has heard of Midnight. The first time he ever bucked was in 1924 at the Stampede at McCleod, Alberta, Canada. He was ridden in the finals by Pete Bruisehead from the Blood Indian Reservation, who was one of the best Indian riders of all times. It was told to me by Herman Linder, nationally famous rider, that Peter Welch sold Midnight at a sheriff's sale at Toronto, Canada, to Col. Jim Eskew, who, not in the too distant past, had the largest traveling rodeo.

Col. Eskew bought some of Peter Welch's top bucking horses and among this bunch was Midnight. There was also another horse in this bunch which was very good named Five Minutes To Midnight. Eskew sold them to Eddie McCarty and Verne Elliott at Montgomery, Alabama. They were put in a baggage car and shipped to Fort Worth, Texas. These horses were bought for $500 each but after their arrival in Fort Worth they could not have been bought for $5,000 each! Yes, they were two mighty horses, very great, but I could name quite a few boys who succeeded in riding them. I could go on and on telling of the great buckers I've witnessed in my day—Double Trouble, Headlight, Overall Bill, Hell's Angel, Figure Two (he was truly a great one!). Scarback and Chain-Foot, owned by the 101 Ranch, were bad ones. There was High Tower, owned by Buffalo Bill, and I rode these last three mentioned many times.

MY DAD rode a real outlaw horse named Burgett. He was an iron-gray stallion that my dad said was the greatest bucker of those days. He was said to have been owned by a ranch at Blackland, Texas, and he reigned as a great bucker up until about 1897. I heard many stories about him as I grew up.

Then there was Old Cyclone, Long Tom, and the Circle D Ranch (W. A. Dickey) Wild West show had a real bucker called Colorado Yellow Stick. The Billie Binder Wild West Show had a string of real buckers of which the top horse was the Spotted Witch. The Kit Carson Wild West Show had a top sorrel bucker they called Windmill. The Gus Hornbrook Cheyenne Frontier Days Wild West show had a great one called Wild Bill. Two good ones on the Farney and Hills Wild West Show were Cry Baby and Hell's Fire. Another top one, on Texas Jack's Wild West Show was called Texas. Colorado Maud was a tough one owned by Jewell Althouse. Cherokee Hammons Wild West Show in Texas had a good horse called Kiowa Chief. Buckskin Bill had a real one named Long Time. Barney Dermis had one called John L.

Then at Calgary, Canada, Col. Lenon LaMarr got one he called Jimmy Simpson. Later the Butler Brothers bought him and changed his name to Ham What Am. This horse helped them considerably to build what they have today!

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Photos Courtesy Author

Steamboat—Guy Holt up

Perhaps a few old-timers will remember the names of the Men Bucking Horse Riders who rode the night of Wednesday, March 14, 1917, when Blue Jay had it so bad: Toots Ayers on Wild Bunch; Jack Joyce on Figure Two; Joe Keyes on Red Hoy; Texas Parker on Tom Humphrey; Luther Lee on Old Trouble; Calgary Red on Wild Bill; John Eubank on Texas Bud; Curly Griffith on Funeral Wagon; Claude Jenkins on Red River; Grady Smith on Backout; Lucky Tom on Dump; and Red Buster on Cork Screw.

Other contestants there were Homer Wilson, Red Sublette, Slim Caskey, Bill Sawyer, Bryan Roach, George Wallace, Curly Griffith, Tex McLeod, Reckless Red, Milt Hinkle (The South American Kid), Bob Malone, B. F. Hughes, Oklahoma Curly Roberts, Texas Jack Lewis, Toots Ayers, Jack Joyce Sr., Grady Smith, Lem Willis, Roy Hammons, Joe Keyes, Montana Earl, Tex Parker, and Rufus Rollen.

I HAVE always looked upon the Cheyenne Frontier Days as the most outstanding of all shows. This was the place where the real champions were made and I knew them all personally. From 1897 to 1940, in order, here they are:

1897—Bill Jones, LaGrange, Wyoming
1898—Fred Bath, Laramie, Wyoming
1899—Billy Cramer, Cheyenne, Wyoming (Billy was a good friend and he wore his hair long like Buffalo Bill.)
1900—Thad Souder, Cheyenne, Wyoming
1901—Otto Ploga, Sybille, Wyoming
1902—Elton Perry, La Grange, Wyoming
1903—Guy Holt, Pinedale, Wyoming
1904—Harry Brannon, Sheridan, Wyoming
1905—Sam Scoville, and Hugh Clark (tied) Cheyenne, Wyoming
1906—Henry Greiner, Pine Bluff, Wyoming
1907—Clayton Danks, Dynamite, Wyoming
1908—Sam Scoville, Cheyenne, Wyoming
1909—Clayton Danks, Dynamite, Wyoming
1910—Sam Scoville, Cheyenne, Wyoming
1911—Charlie McKinley, Plattsville, Colorado
1912—Frank Carter, La Grange, Wyoming
1913—Henry Webb, Wheatland, Wyoming
1914—Floyd Carroll, Wheatland, Wyoming
1915—Henry Walters, Mexia, Texas
1916—Hugh Strickland, Panhandle, Texas
1917—Sam Brownell, Cheyenne, Wyoming
1918—Leonard Stroud (gave his home as Rocky Ford, Colorado, but is, in reality, from Clarksville, Texas)
1919—Eddie McCarty, Goldsmith, Wyoming
1920—Hugh Strickland, Fort Worth, Texas
1921—Phil Yoder, Yoder, Wyoming
1922—Howard Tegland, Miles City, Montana
1923—Dave Whyte, Cheyenne, Wyoming
1924—Paddy Ryan, Miles City, Montana
1925—Billy Wilkinson, Cheyenne, Wyoming
1926—Mike Stewart, Casa Grande, Montana
1927—Earl Thode, Belvidere, South Dakota
1928—Sharkey Irwin, Pine Bluff, Arkansas
1929—Floyd Stillings, Marshfield, Oregon
1930—Pete Knight, Calgary, Canada
1931—Earl Thode, Belvidere, South Dakota
1932—Earl Thode, Belvidere, South Dakota
1933—Turk Greenough, Red Lodge, Montana
1934—Earl Thode, Belvidere, South Dakota
1935—Turk Greenough, Red Lodge, Montana
1936—Turk Greenough, Red Lodge, Montana
1937—Eddie Woods, Gilroy, California
1938—Nick Knight, Cody, Wyoming
1939—Doff Aber, Sheridan, Wyoming
1940—Chet McCarty, Hotchkiss, Colorado

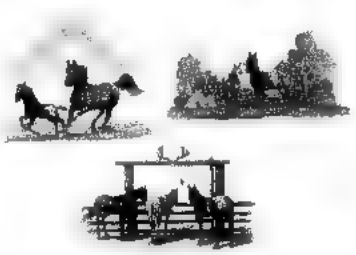
Yes, these were the Champions. I knew them all well and many more, too. Two of the best who cannot go unmentioned were Bob Crosby and Bob Askins.

WE DO NOT wish to slight the ladies because they were also very courageous and very good riders. In the old days they even contested along with the boys and against them in the bronc riding. They rode what we called "slick" which meant that they did not have their stirrups tied down. Here is a list of the better known cowgirls, some old-timers and some who are still active. It is impossible to recall each and every one but I shall do my best. After this goes to press there is no doubt that I will think of more.

These are not all bronc riders; some were trick riders, bull riders, trick ropers, etc. Some of them participated in several different events.

Annie Shaffer, Prairie Lillie Allen, Alice and Margie Greenough, Rene Hafley Shelton, Fox Hastings, Florence Hughes Randolph, Fay King, Edith Irwin, Iva Dell Jacobs, Helen Clancy, Pearl Biron, Mary Keen, Fanny Sperry Steele, Goldie St. Claire, Peggy Warner, Lucille Mulhall, Flores LaQue, Helen Maish, Francis Irwin, Ollie Osborn, Tillie Baldwin, Lottie Vandreau, Thelma Warner, Vera McGinnis, Mildred Douglas Hinkle, and Alice Sisty. (I have been married to both Mildred and Alice.)

Then there was Ruth Roach, Claire Belcher Thompson, Beryl Jackson, Vaughn Kreig, Agee Lindsey, Tad Lucas, Ollie Stoke Mix, Rose Smith, Miss Dolly Eskew, Mabel Kline, Betty Myers, Dorothy Morrell Robbins, Mabel Strickland, Vivian White, Ruby Dickey, Bonnie Gray, Lorena Trickey Peterson, Rose



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There was also Rosie Flores, Tiny Binder, Betty Jo Elliott, Brida Gafford, Bernice Dossey, Ella Linton, Ruby Roberts, Mayme Stroud, Grace White, Effie Dickey Corbin, Georgia Gilliam, Mildred Mix, Mary Parks, Alma Hammer, Peggy Murray, Lola Hunt, Josephine Algeri, Tina Pritchard, Smokey Hester, Lela Goodnight, Violet Carruthers, Myrtle Cox, Eva Rogers, Betty Hazen, Marjorie Roberts, Thea Thinnes McCall, P. R. Collins, Mary Cardinal, Dorothy Bardole Hackley, Mrs. Walter Heacock, Mrs. Ray Bird, Vicki Grugan, Dot Snyder, Matt King Downs, Estelle Clark, Sarah Glosser, Blanche McBee, Bea Broso, Peaches Doucette, Fay Blackstone, Maude Tarr, Prairie Rose Henderson, Doris Haynes, Lula Bell Parr, Losie Kitchen, Nan Aspinwall Gable, Lucille Richards, Dorothy Hunt, Alice Adams, Kitty Wilks Canutt, Gene Creed, Florence Rush, Violet Clements DeAnda, Mae Manning Lillie (Mrs. Pawnee Bill), Jennie Hughes, Nellie Lingle, Doreen Morris, Grace Runyon Nesbitt, Toots Jordan, Velda Calahan Tindall, Madge Rinehart, Lorene Jackson, Thelma Hunt, Ruth Mix, Margie Merritt, Dixie DeVere, Blanche McGahea, Bea Bristow, Rose Davis, Jessie Roberts, Inez Wederman, Loretta Butler, Booger Crosby, Zella Hunt, Minnie Adams and Eva Caskey.

This bronc riding business is dangerous and hazardous enough for the men but is doubly so for the women. The girls I recall who lost their lives in this death defying pastime are as follows: Opal Wood, Maxine McClusky, Anne Greely, Mrs. Ed Wright, Louise Hartwig, Bonnie McCarroll and Marie Gibson. Etta Myers had her neck broken while riding a bucking horse. She was one of the old-time lady bronc riders, was married to a Mexican roper, Carlos Carens, and rode for Charlie Sparks and for the old 101 Ranch.

ANNIE SHAFFER was the first Lady Bucking Horse Rider. Fox Hastings was the first Lady Bulldogger. She was a redhead with arm muscles like a man. The newspapers wrote her up many times and along with the stories they printed a picture of her arm (a pose similar to the one seen on Arm and Hammer Soda boxes) with the caption "Jellybean Exterminator!" Several other girls tried their hand at bulldogging, also. Two of them were Claire Belcher Thompson and Smokey Hester. Mrs. Riordan rode bucking horses using a side saddle.

Lucille Mulhall won fame on two continents as a roper. She was born on a ranch and learned to rope almost from the time she was big enough to hold a rope in her hand. She wasn't afraid to "dab" a loop on the biggest and wildest steers. Once in Oklahoma, while still in her teens, Lucille roped a coyote during a visit of Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt vowed it was the greatest feat he had ever seen a cowgirl perform.

Alice Sisty Hinkle, a wee mite of a girl, was a superb rider and was featured riding her two horses, Roman style, and jumping them over her Cord automobile.

Dorothy Bardole Hackley was from Rockford, Illinois, and Fog Horn Clancy gave her her start in rodeo when she was in her teens. She was very clever with a rope and could do almost anything with it but make it talk. Fog dubbed her the "Female Will Rogers." She was the first girl to do the Texas skip on horseback and I believe that was back about 1927 or thereabout.

Nan Aspinwall Gable was a dancer, a sharp-shooter and a good rider. In 1911, before she married Frank Gable, she rode horseback from San Francisco to New York City. This story was featured a year or so ago on the famous TV show "Death Valley Days" and Nan made a guest appearance and was interviewed after the show. Though she is well up in years now, she is still a very attractive woman.

Many of these cowgirls did not weigh over eighty or a hundred pounds but they proved that they were adept at riding and did not have to be a heavyweight to be good. Lorena Trickey Peterson proved this and she was one of the most colorful and outstanding of the lot. She won the World's Championship Bronc Riding at Pendleton, Oregon, in 1919. With the title she won the last saddle given to women bronc riders. After that year the Women's Bronc Riding at Pendleton was on an exhibition basis with no contest.

In Chicago in 1923 she won the All-Around Cowgirl Championship and $2,000 in cash. She won two Alpine Hotel Trophies in 1920 and 1921. In 1924 at Cheyenne, Wyoming she won the All-Around Championship and a trip to Hawaii. Lorena retired from rodeo in 1929, still undefeated; she died in 1962.

Little Mary Parks could not have weighed over eighty-five or ninety pounds if she were soaking wet but she also held the Championship for the Women's Bronc Riding for awhile.

Tad Lucas was propably one of the greatest horsewomen that ever lived. Very tiny, she was a good bronc and bull rider as well as a trick rider. When her daughter Mitzi was born prematurely, Mitzi weighed only one and one-half pounds. Tad had a picture made holding her big Stetson hat with Mitzi inside the hat! Mitzi has also made a name for herself in rodeo.

Now for a humorous note—it is an actual fact—but I shall omit the cowgirl's name. She was a bronc rider, a blonde and very attractive but a very rugged individual! This girl walked into a bar in New York during the rodeo and asked the bartender for a package of Beechnut. When the bartender handed her a package of gum she quipped, "I don't want gum, I want CHEWING TOBACCO!" So he gave her the chewing tobacco, she took a healthy mouthful and said, "Now give me a shot of whiskey!"

MANY of the greatest bucking horses never made the rodeo circuit. They remained on the ranches. The hardest horse I ever rode was named after a great rider, Ralph Whetlock, and was called the Whetlock Sorrel. He was owned by the L.F.D. Ranch in Texas and was a natural bucker. He did not have to have the thick flank strap on him to make him "turn on." He was unpredictable and would break in two at any time, not for just ten seconds, but for a full minute. I had to walk back

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to the cow wagon, as did many others, when a rattlesnake would rattle or a rabbit or a coyote jumped up unexpectedly and "boogered" him. The Whetlock Sorrel would try his best to leave his rider with them and sometimes he succeeded in doing so. While being saddled you never knew when he would try to put his hind foot in your pocket.

Two other horses I rode there while riding the rough string were Rocky Mountain and Roche. Rocky Mountain was a big black horse and I feel sure that either of these cayuses was as good as any that ever made the rodeo circuit. Were I to continue telling of the many very good horses I've seen and ridden *AT* it would fill volumes. In those days we rode in what we called slick trees, the old F. A. Meaneys and the R. T. Fraziers, until they began making the freak saddles called the Bull Moose, the Charlie Tipton Tree, the Fay Ward Special and the Miles City Trap. Now they have the Association saddle known as the Committee Tree, fourteen-inch swell, fourteen- and fifteen-inch trees. Does the Committee Tree give the real bucker an even chance when the whistle blows in eight to ten seconds? What do you think? And please, what is your opinion of Blue Jay? Could I be wrong?

Editor's Note: For an example of the love people had for Milt's other favorite, Tipperary, see first story, page 39, in this issue.

Wild Old Days

(Continued from page 39)

shadowed shelf above them, they could not have failed to see the figure so desperately clinging to his precarious position.

Finally, their fury having been cooled by failure, combined with the early spring dusk and accompanying drop in temperature, they departed, though not without many a backward glance. There was one pause before they began the steep ascent up the bank. They peered out over the uncertain river, now so dark the far bank was only a darker blur in the distance, but after a short conversation they shrugged their shoulders in resignation and disappeared.

After about an hour, the Mountie climbed down, stiff with cold and nearly paralyzed by the discomforts of his recent bed, but at least alive. In the darkness he found his way back to the fort, back to his comrades who had given him up for dead. During the night, a blinding snowstorm set in, and in its enveloping cover, the entire force was able to make its escape. Doubtless the Indians thought the spirit of that vanished first Mountie had gone before them to scout the trail.

SPOKANE'S MOST HILARIOUS CHRISTMAS

By Mary Pease Lashbrook

BY midsummer of 1894, the city of Spokane, Washington, was recovering from the great fire of 1889 in which thirty-two blocks in the heart of the city were destroyed.

Then had followed the Panic of 1893 and Spokane reeled from the disasters of bank failures, union strikes among carpenters, and labor riots in the Coeur d'Alene mining country.

Through all this there were several men who knew how to sit tight and look forward to better times. These men kept up a Spokane Bureau of Immigration in spite of the fact that most travelers rode freight trains and begged someone for a hand out as soon as they arrived.

In the fall of 1894 the Bureau heard that the Government was planning to establish another army post in the Northwest. They chipped in out of individual pockets to pay A. A. Newberry's expenses for the trip to Washington, D. C. He was instructed to capture the prospective fort.

When Mr. Newberry returned, he reported to a mass meeting held in the Auditorium Theatre that the new fort could be located at Spokane if the city could provide $40,000 of which $15,000 had to be in cash and the balance in land that could be negotiated. The city would also have to furnish free water.

There was plenty of unoccupied land then, so the problem of land donations was no worry. However, raising $15,000 in cash when it was hard for most citizens to raise fifteen cents was another matter. Still the people voted to raise the money, then walked home because no one could afford to ride the street cars.

ALTHOUGH every citizen who possibly could responded, the amount fell far short of the stipulated amount. And early in December War Department officials were demanding action. It was then that the women of Spokane came to the rescue.

One got the brilliant idea of having a "fort" Christmas party. It was decided to have people donate anything they could, the donations to be used for presents and given out according to corresponding numbers on tickets sold. The distribution was to be made from a huge Christmas tree on the stage of the Auditorium Theatre.

The response was enthusiastic. At first the list of donated gifts that came pouring in was amusing, then it began to remind one of the family pewter melted up to supply the bullets of patriots.

Someone donated a colt. Teachers gave music and painting lessons, and the list ran down through dental and surgical work, a month's board at the Hotel Spokane, curing irons, rheumatism medicine, paint, photographic and plumbing work, a month's shaves, $10.00 worth of horseshoeing—anything that one could name was listed for the fort Christmas tree. One poor woman, who could do nothing more, finally got together the ingredients for a mince pie and offered that.

Yet it wasn't altogether a poverty social event, for a new bicycle, an expensive gun, fine dishes, furs, a gold watch, a $30.00 set of harness, several tons of coal, and cords of wood were among the contributions. Nothing was rejected.

The price of admission tickets to the tree laden with chances was $1.00. Everyone sold tickets. One couldn't meet a policeman, councilman or any other person who was able to get around who didn't have tickets to sell. Many a child on Christmas morning found a ticket to the tree in his stocking. People from other towns also bought them.

The project grew so large it was New Year's Eve before the committee called a halt. When the Auditorium doors were opened at seven o'clock the building was soon filled to capacity. The crowd, bubbling over with the feeling of booster unity, cared little if there weren't a loose dollar left in town. They were all in the same boat. It was the fort now or never.

The curtain rose and Santa Claus in the person of W. H. Macfarlane gave the signal to unveil a thirty-foot, brightly lighted Christmas tree.

The committee was present with two big churns full of coupons which de-

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scribed the presents. Two well-known Spokane residents were selected to draw tickets.

One man remarked, "It will be worth a dollar to watch the faces of the people as the numbers and prizes are announced even though I have no personal interest in the fort."

The first prize drawn was a pound of tea. Next was a bull pup, then a case of beer. The city newspapers had offered subscriptions for presents and the circulation manager of one drew his own publication for a year. Members of the committee, who had all bought tickets, carried home potatoes and pictures; one lady drew a $125 shotgun. The postmaster won a woman's hat. One man very likely lost his faith in omens. He had dreamed that a certain number would win the gold watch so he bribed a schoolboy who held that number to sell it to him for $2.00. The ticket won a harmonica.

The Christmas tree netted $4,500—enough to assure the fort's location so far as Spokane's part of the work was concerned—and the fort came in due time.

THE STRANGE LIFE OF MARTIN J. KJOROM

By Loula Dickerson Arnold

ON August 19, 1871, in Valders, Norway, a male child was born to the Ole Johnson family. He was destined to be a whimsical, prophetic and solitary man.

In a small book of verse, *Thought Ticklers*, Martin J. Kjorom, as the Norwegian immigrant later came to be known, wrote:

Among the events they promise us soon
A journey that might be some fun,
For they claim they'll make a trip to the moon
In a shell shot out of a gun.

The author never lived long enough to know about space capsules and present-day astronauts, who are being at this time "shot out of guns" and orbiting the universe, for he died in 1954.

Neither did Kjorom live to see his two literary efforts. *A Monument to a Burro* and *Thought Ticklers*, become successful enough so that royalties could provide him a modest income in his last days as he had always dreamed and hoped for.

Instead, the author's last years were drudged out on his Colorado mining claim, with only a meager pension to keep body and soul together. The Norwegian's great ambition, high hopes and glorious dreams were wasted.

THE OLE JOHNSON family left Norway and sailed for America, settling on an eighty-acre tract of land in Buffalo County, Wisconsin. Ole Johnson received his final citizenship papers on May 27, 1884. For no apparent reason, the Johnsons changed their name to their original Norwegian family name of "Kjorom" in 1900.

Ole and his wife tilled the soil and worked hard, as all early settlers did, living out their last days on their homestead near Gilmanton, Wisconsin.

On March 30, 1915, a man appeared in Probate Court at Alma, Wisconsin, using perfect and precise English, and stated that he was a son and heir of the Ole Johnson Kjorom estate.

Through sworn statements made by the district attorney of Buffalo County, in which he mentioned processing the legal papers for Ole Johnson at the time he applied for American citizenship, Martin J. Kjorom received his share of his father's estate which was exactly $987.97.

Courtesy Author

The cabin of Martin Kjorom, northeast of Saguache, Colorado.

Kjorom took the money and left for Colorado where he invested every penny in a mine at Schucker Gulch which he called "Black Eagle," located near the county seat town of Saguache, in Saguache County.

The next forty years of his life were lived as a lonely prospector. He never married, and the few hours he spent aside from digging and panning on his mine, he spent writing his books of prose and verse.

This self-taught individualist was no typical and ordinary prospector with long grey beard, slouch-hat, and a nail to keep his coat buttoned, although his livelihood was a precarious one. In the half-stone, half-clapboard makeshift cabin hidden high among aspen and pine trees, his mind and soul seemed to thrive.

Kjorom had kept entirely to himself from the time he went to Schucker Gulch until July, 1936, when because of poor health and the infirmities of age, he was granted $30.00 monthly as an old age pension. This necessitated his having to make a trip once each month to Saguache to receive his check.

The townspeople were surprised to see a clean-shaven, neat little man, wearing a suit—unpressed but accompanied by a clean un-ironed shirt and string tie —walking into town that first day. They were even more amazed to see him leave the courthouse, and with the aid of a crooked homemade cane, saunter slowly to the high school library. This was a pattern the old prospector followed the rest of his life. Each month after signing for his pension check, he'd go immediately to the library to return books and borrow another supply until his next trip.

In February of 1941, Kjorom was snowed in at his mine. When the day approached for him to go to town, neither the aged miner nor his burro could walk through the snow. This undaunted Norwegian solved his traveling problem simply by making some skis out of old lumber in his cabin. It is not known if Kjorom had ever mastered the technique of the winter sport in his youth, but residents of the little county seat stated he sailed down the mountainside and into town with admirable proficiency.

About a year after Martin J. Kjorom died, Pete Burnham, County Assessor, and his wife were fishing near the old prospector's abandoned cabin at Schucker Gulch. The view of the torn and sagging roof on the desolate abode was a startling sight. Looking through the open door, they saw two large boxes. Upon investigating the contents, the Burnhams discovered hundreds of books and pamphlets

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of which Kjorom was the author. They had been copyrighted in 1924.

The questioning thoughts—evidence of the bold and searching mind of this poor and humble immigrant—lay covered by dust. In only a short while, the decaying roof would tumble onto the boxes which served as caskets for Kjorom's brainchildren and they would be buried forever. The man and his wife gently closed the door and walked away.

In his poem, *Casus Belli*, the author spoke of hopping aboard a comet and taking a trip into "Star Spangled Space."

The Comet conductor came up to my seat
'Ticket,' he said with a leer.
I had no ticket so that was that—
He threw me out on my ear.

The author continued to tell how he tumbled and fell until he landed on a sphere, where he found a war was in progress between two kings. The conflict had originated over an argument about bedbugs. One king had said that the bedbug was black while the other king said it was brown.

Kjorom made his point quite clearly about wars being such waste and useless strife when he ended his poem with these words:

I stumbled along and stubbed my toe
On a glorious golden crown,
Two bedbugs therein, lay cold in death,
One was BLACK and the other was BROWN.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 4)

Men of Rodeo

Gentlemen:

I am just now getting around to some of your back issues. In the April, 1964 TRUE WEST is a picture of teams hauling pipe from one oil field to another. There is no description of whose teams they are but my husband is almost certain they were his. We have compared the picture with the ones we have and everything compares. My husband owned twenty-six teams and contracted in the oil fields. They were such beautiful teams.

We enjoy all three of your magazines so very much and know many of the people mentioned. Henry Grammer "King of the Osage" was a very good friend of my husband. He also knew Hatry Williams, Clay McGonigal, Joe Gardner, and most all named in this story, even Henry's horse "Flaxie." My husband was raised at Bliss (now Marland), Oklahoma, and enjoys every story about the Indians and the 101 Ranch where he rode bucking horses many times.—Mrs. Otis Robbins, Route 1, Box 114, Milton Freewater, Oregon.

Don't miss "I Knew Them All" in this issue.

Cripple Creek

Gentlemen:

In the April issue of TRUE WEST there was a story of "Bull Hill Savages." Well, that's where I was born and raised, in Cripple Creek.

In your story you mentioned Greasy Miller. I knew him and have been to his house at Gillette, Colorado. I wasn't very old when we were there, but I remember all about it. He had his horse's stall right in his house. I remember him going to the little creek and getting his drinking and cooking water, then he stirred up the wood stove, and then stirred his potatoes with the stove-hook. I also remember when they took him to the county hospital where they gave him a bath—he didn't last long after that!

I remember a lot of the people you mentioned, Art Stanker for one. I also knew a man named Pete Allstrum—he was a fiddler, but only when he felt the spirits (they came out of a jug). He was quite a character, but we all liked him.

My father was born at Gillette on the day of the bullfight. I was in Cripple Creek several years ago—it's surely a ghost town although I saw a lot of my old friends. Mr. Wilkerson, the postmaster, was the high school principal when I was there. All in all, I enjoyed the story very much.—Mrs. Edythe L. (Kirk) Lovins, 232 Placentia, Shell Beach, California.

That Funny Feeling

Dear Sir:

Imagine my surprise when my oldest son brought his copy of TRUE WEST to me to show me my picture. In the story "The Day The Road Blew Up" the genial group celebrating a housewarming was our house. My father and mother are in the door and I am the gal next to Jesse Jones, and my sister is the one in front of Sam McClanahan. I was thirteen and she was eighteen. The picture was taken in 1909.

We were the first settlers in the Mesquite Valley in November, 1908. A promoter, Funk, of Los Angeles, located families for a certain sum and Papa was the first to bite. Later there were quite a few families but they didn't last long.—Mrs. Erma (Hall) Hoight, 9480 Atascadero Ave., Atascadero, California.

Rope Machine

Gentlemen:

Regarding "So You Think You Know the West," item 11, in the July issue, the "New Era Rope Machine" was manufactured by its inventor, Arthur D. Long, in Fairfield, Iowa, probably as late as 1920. I watched him assemble hundreds of them over the years from about 1914. The castings were made, I think, by The Iowa Malleable Iron Company in Fairfield, and he assembled the parts in a "shop" (really just a shed) in back of his home at 105 West Madison Street, and later (under similar circumstances) at 108 West Adams Street. Mr. Long was, for years, in the Experimental Department at the Dexter Washing Machine Factory at Fairfield. Both he and Mrs. Long are now deceased, but their two sons are living and I sent each of them a copy of your magazine.

Since mailing them each your magazine, I've already heard from Larry, who wrote, "You have no idea how pleased I was to receive a copy of TRUE WEST magazine containing a picture of one of our rope machines! It was like running into an old friend." The machines were sold all over the world, if anyone wants further and more complete information, I'm sure Larry would be glad to supply additional data. He lives at 2921 Idaho Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota. —J. R. Gobble, P. O. Box 2442, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

Information Wanted

Sir:

An item appearing in your June '65 issue of TRUE WEST under the caption "Wild Old Days," refers to an Indian girl baby found on the Wounded Knee Battlefield.

I believe this baby was adopted by General Colby, who had a son of about the same age as the girl. The General thought he would make a home for the girl and provide a sister for his son. General Colby's home at that time was in Beatrice, Nebraska. The information I am

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providing is from my memory of an article in the Chicago *Record* entitled "Talks With Our Boys and Girls" and appeared, as nearly as I can remember, about the time of the Spanish American War. I do not know what became of the Colbys in later years.

Who, among your Big Horn Basin, Wyoming, readers may be able to supply information as to what became of Ed Waters who was one of three brothers in that country during the early years of the century? An older brother, Ira, had a store and was the victim, along with a woman who was riding with him, of an auto accident many years ago, when in attempting to negotiate a very sharp turn onto a bridge, the car went into the canal. I would appreciate any information.—C. M. Delano, 4068 Iowa Street, San Diego, California 92104.

Rails along the Camino

Dear Pat:

Just a quick line to say how much I enjoyed reading "Pete Kitchen's Road of Dead Men," by Raymond W. Thorp.

If I may, I would like to correct an error in Mr. Thorp's text beginning, "When the Southern Pacific Railroad paralled the Camino de los Muertos . . ." The Southern Pacific did not build a line paralleling the Camino de los Muertos until 1912, some seventeen years after Pete's death. Mr. Thorp may be confusing the New Mexico & Arizona Railroad, built by the Santa Fe, which arrived in Nogales from Benson, in 1881-82. This line followed the Sonoita Creek to Calabasas and from there roughly paralleled the Camino de los Muertos, at a distance, the remaining six miles to Nogales. Abandonment of portions of this line began in 1932 and today nothing remains of this old railroad except some weed-grown portions of the old roadbed. The present Southern Pacific line does follow the Camino de los Muertos from Nogales to Tucson, and the "Camino" itself has lost none of its reputation. Presently Route U.S. 89, the Camino has a highway death rate exceeded by only one other highway in the state.—David Rees, Drawer "R", Ajo, Arizona 85321.

REPLY: I am indebted to Mr. Rees for his pointing out my error—and he is exactly right. A small thing, but one hard to point out by one who is not as well versed in Arizona railroad history as he. —R. W. Thorp

Treasure in the Attic

Dear Joe:

The articles in TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES are so interesting that I read each issue at least five or six times (my wife does the same) while waiting for the next ones to appear on the newsstands.

"Bottle Bugs" by Raymond W. Hillman in the October issue inspired me to take on a new hobby—bottle collecting. If I had not read this article, a bushel basket full of old bottles would still be collecting dust and taking up space in the attic of my dad's old home-place.

Twenty-seven years ago, when I was fourteen years old, these bottles were given to me by Jack Simco, a fourteen-year-old boy who was interested in experimenting with chemicals. Jack found a number of bottles with chemicals stored in the warehouse of his dad's country store. Jack's grandfather had owned a drug store, and these chemicals were discarded when the drug store was no longer in operation.

While I was sitting around the old pot-bellied wood stove in his dad's country store, watching the old men spit tobacco juice into the sawdust, school children waiting for lunch as the storekeeper reached into the cracker barrel, filled a large paper sack, then reached for the hoop of cheese and sliced off a pound and put it into the sack with the crackers, handed the sack to the children and said, "That will be 10 cents," Jack told me about finding the chemicals and offered to divide them with me. I accepted. Chemicals—just any kind of chemicals—were hard to get in those days. All the spending money we had was what we earned hoeing corn for a neighbor for a dollar a day (eight hours).

That is how I happened to own these old bottles. After using some of the contents, the bottles were stored in the attic.

After reading Mr. Hillman's article, I went back to my dad's home-place and the bottles were still there in the attic after all these years. I brought eight old bottles home and when I examined them closely, sure enough, the seam on every bottle only extended part way up the neck and disappeared. This proved the bottles were made before 1903. There were several rough flaws and imperfections on some of the bottles.

Thanks to TRUE WEST and Mr. Hillman, I was rewarded with interesting reading and profitable information that led to the beginning of a new hobby. —Charles Kelley, Jr., 1717 North F Street, Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Antique Cars

Dear Sir:

I have been a reader of your magazines for over three years now, and I say that they are the best of western reading on the newsstand today. I have read most of the others, and they are not half as good.

I thought that maybe some of your readers could help me locate some antique cars for my collection. I would appreciate it very much if they would send any information which could help me locate any cars older than 1929 in any condition. Even if only to say, "There is an old ..... in a field near ....." they might help me more than they think. Please write and tell me the location of the car and whether it is for sale or not. If I buy the car I will be glad to pay for the information sent me.

Also I am interested in purchasing old automobile handbooks, repair manuals and license plates, and old coins and tokens.—Robin Court, 10582 Thomas Drive, Anaheim, California.

Two Westerners Named Jim

Dear Mr. Small:

I thoroughly enjoy all three of your publications and have often run across people in their pages from Northern Arizona whom I have known or heard of quite frequently as a young girl.

My husband, Frank, has been buying your magazines for years, though for me they are a recent discovery, one of which I'm awfully glad.

Though I am only twenty-four, I was raised in the ranch country around Seligman, Arizona, and have known many of the old-timers. I remember old Jim Mahone, whose picture was in the August edition of TRUE WEST.

Before he died, Jim would spend the better part of the day walking from the Indian village northwest of town into Seligman to get bones and scraps for his dogs from Schoeny's Store and from Grandma Kincaid's Cafe on Santa Fe Avenue down by the depot. Grandma Kincaid often fed the old man knowing full well he had little or no money. She was a very good-hearted woman and couldn't stand to see anyone go hungry.

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When he would come into town, Jim would walk awhile, then rest awhile. At the time of his death I believe the whole town turned out for his funeral. He was given a complete military funeral in which my father and others of the James Denny Post of the American Legion participated. I will never forget this as many of the Indian women from the village moaned and cried and sang such mournful chants that I was brought to tears myself.

My favorite character then and now was Jim Bennett, an old cowpuncher who lived in an old line-camp on the Double O Ranch southwest of town. He was a very good friend of the family and ate many meals with us. I don't believe he ever came to town without stopping by our house. I loved to hear him tell of the days on the range when he was a young man.

He was born in Texas on August 2, 1885, I believe. He was named for Jim Taylor, to whom he was related. Jim Taylor was John Wesley Hardin's sidekick during the Taylor-Sutton feud. He told us many tales of this feud and much of what he said about it, I have been able to find correct in books written about that particular subject.

In 1958, we gave Jim a community birthday party for his 72nd birthday. He was the best-hearted person you could ever know, though a man I would hate to have for an enemy.

Someday, I hope to write a biography of old Jim, for, as I said, he is my favorite and the most interesting character I know of.—Mrs. Sylvia F. Hall, Route 1, Box 887, Flagstaff, Arizona.

Bill Timmons

Dear Sir:

This is my first time to write to you, but I am a devoted reader of TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES and think they are the best on the market. I would enjoy more treasure stories in each issue, but I guess we can't have our cake and eat it too, so just keep up the good work.

The reason I am writing is that some of your readers might not have heard that William (Bill) Timmons, an early-day cowboy, died not long ago in Waco, Texas. He went to work at fourteen for the Charles Goodnight Ranch. That was in 1910. He was part of a drover's team that took a herd of buffalo from the Goodnight Ranch to Yellowstone National Park. During the Depression, Timmons helped organize Civilian Conservation Corps camps across the state. He was a good man.—Faye Enix, 3108 Shawnee Terrace, Fort Worth, Texas.

John Day

Dear Sir:

Your short story of the activities and death of John Day prompts me to add a further shred of information relating to the subject.

To the list of geographic names honoring John Day should be added that of Grays Lake in southeastern Idaho. That statement, I realize, calls for an explanation.

In 1914 I was with a survey party that was working in the vicinity of Grays Lake. We became acquainted with a real old settler who was known as "Pops Sibbits." (That spelling is phonetic and is probably not the way he spelled it.) He told us that when the first post office was established there, the Post Office Department instructed them to pick a short, easy name, so they arbitrarily selected the name Gray.

That name, Gray, seems to have rubbed off onto the lake. Early maps of the region show the name as John Day's Lake. Later ones, but still old, show it as John Gray's Lake. Now it is just Grays Lake.

Perhaps the Grant County Museum would like to add this information to their file on the subject.—Arthur W. Stevens, P. O. Box 1664, Hollywood, California 90028.

The Sun Dance

Howdy:

I am a retired rancher, so naturally I am very interested in cattle and Indians, among other things. We used to have Indians working for us on the ranch putting up a lot of hay or feeding cattle in the winter.

When the cold arctic winter is over, and many different fur-bearing animals have been killed, pelted, dried and sold to the Hudson's Bay Company or some private dealer, that's considered the end of the fur season. This means from four to five months' rest for the Indians, but they are not content to rest all this time. They start beating the drums and dancing the old powwow tea dance, chicken dance. At last the invitations go out for a sun dance. When the poplar leaves come out, we know the time is near. It takes an elderly man to start a sun dance. Tobacco is sent out wrapped in tanned deerhide with a feather stuck under the sinew-string.

For the tepee, it takes thirteen posts with a fork in the top, set in the ground in a circle. Thirteen rails are cut to go from one crotch to the next and for this purpose they skid out green poplar trees not big enough for shade trees. When the center log is found, all the riders carry a shotgun. They shoot the limbs off, then the tree is chopped down, trimmed more and loaded on a wagon. The riders pick up the limbs and tie them on the saddles. A hole is dug in the center of the circle and a finger ring is wrapped in buckskin and dropped in a hole. Now the center post is raised with ropes, and dirt put in the hole all around and tamped down. This done, someone makes a speech.

The dancers must not drink all day and all night, and next day they quit at dark, then clap the tree, and go home. The Indians blow whistles and dance up and down. When the music stops, the dancers sit down to rest; when the music starts again, they all get up and dance up and down.

Two men make a campfire in the dance hall on the ground. There they cook moose meat, rice and raisins and a flour gravy, all mixed up. These same two men have four large stone pipes made of brown pipestone, with long stems—about fourteen inches. There are stands of willows to rest the stems on. A straight willow split in one end, is pressed down on a burning coal, and with this stick and coal they light the four pipes.

The drums and dancing are going on all this time except when they rest for a while in the night. I think it's cruel not to feed the dancers and head man.

This was many years ago but the Indians still have sun dances, and in much the same way I believe.—Ged Poitras, 9510-106A Avenue, Edmonton, Canada.

Information Supplied

Howdy:

In regards to the inquiry of Henry M. Senff, Yucaipa, California, in April '65 TRUE WEST, "Truly Western," page 4, about a John Lang: While trying to run down a small rock crusher for mining, I met old John to talk to. I had seen him

Miscellaneous

I DRAW AND SHOOT in 1/20 second. Information $1.00. F. Hogue, 508 South 6th Street, Laramie, Wyoming.

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Miscellaneous

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off and on around Baker, Oregon, for many years but not to visit. This trip, 1938, I stopped at his cabin about an hour. I might inject here I was pressed for time, evening was closing in, the road was rough and rocky and rutted, and I yet had to go about a hundred miles east home.

That was the last time I had a talk with John. I was always sorry afterwards that I did not stay longer as I felt there was a story there. Among other things, as we talked, he told me he had just come back from a trip down to old Tascosa, Texas, where he had as a "young squirt" done some cowpunching.

As I recall his words, "I didn't spend much of my life there. (He didn't say how much.) It was wild and woolly, plenty rough and tough and always some killings among the cattle outfits."

This was sometime in the '80s. I don't recall as he mentioned any particular cattle outfit that he worked for. Now, as to his trip back there about fifty years later, he said when he got back there everything had changed, hardly knew the old place, was practically a ghost town, all the old-timers had gone, moved away and died but one old lady that had lived there all her life and had worked there as a waitress in an eating house. John recalled that he had eaten there quite often and had spoken to her, but she couldn't seem to recall him to memory. So he only stayed around there two or three days, got disgusted and came back home to Oregon.

A wisp of a smile crossed his face as he looked at me and said, "Podner, if you ever make a trip back to the place of your youth, don't wait fifty years to make it; too much water gone under the bridge. Twenty years later is almost too long."

John Lang, when I knew him, was a rather slight, slender man, would weigh about 135 with his boots on, was alert, very quick and active despite being well along in years. He told me he had a silver mine, was working it partly as a pastime and hobby, but made a few dollars at it. His mine and cabin was located seventeen miles north of Baker, Oregon, and about five miles farther up Rock Creek, north and west. That was the John Lang I knew.

Following are vital statistics I gathered. John George Lang: Born Nashville, Illinois; Date of Birth, January 15, 1862. Died of cerebral hemorrhage in St. Elizabeth Hospital, Baker, Oregon.

John George Lang died April 4, 1942 and is buried in Haines, Oregon, on The Old Oregon Trail.—Oscar Allstead, 2525 Estes Street, Baker, Oregon 97814.

Wanted: Help!

(Continued from page 3)

issue that slumps and it *hurts* because we don't have that advertising to take up the slack. At the cost of repeating, we want to hold the magazine without advertising and if you'll just buy it regularly on the newsstands, it will light our shuck and we'll be gone like a chicken-stealing dog with a tin can on his tail!

I think most of you know this but I want to go over briefly just what you miss in not getting *every* issue of OLD WEST. We have the durndest group of people who are keeping these magazines catalogued and are working up an Old West library of rare books. In the Spring issue, for instance (on the newsstands January 4) our book will be short but valuable. It is selling currently for $125. (By golly, that's 250 times what you will pay for this particular issue!) It concerns a Norwegian boy whose adventures in the Southwest will stand your hair right on end. After he was ransomed from the Indians, he wrote of his experiences. This kid's courage will make you swell up with pride. It is not a long book, as I said, but very hard to find these days, as the price tag indicates. It is the old "scarcity" factor at work.

In the same issue will be an extra long feature to make up for the brevity of the book. It might eventually have become a book, too, if "Tex" Banta had lived. The manuscript as the old hunter left it is handwritten on long sheets of paper which are falling apart now and fading with age. We hope someday the family will see that they are preserved in some museum. Tex told his story well—certainly nobody else could have told it for him. He and Kit Carson would have made good companions.

There are several other features in the Spring issue of OLD WEST that are worth the price of the magazine alone, as well as articles from two issues of TRUE WEST.

SO THERE it is—if you are an OLD WEST fan we need your help now—pull them out on the newsstands, call the *wholesaler* if your dealer isn't getting any—or enough—magazines, and most important, don't miss a *single* issue because if enough others miss it, we are in trouble. Our national distributor told us that it was absolutely impossible to understand how these things worked. He said some issues sold much less than others and it not only happened in one spot but all over the country, as well as in Canada. He said it was like the people of San Diego, California, for instance, phoning the people in Bangor, Maine, and saying, "Let's just hold off on this issue and hit the next one hard!" Eerie? Dadgummed right—besides, it *hurts!*

Naturally, if you pass the good word along to your friends, I'll bet you I could spend seven solid days fasting and thinking and not come up with a single objection! If things don't straighten out, I may not get to eat anyhow!

Again, we are in no trouble whatsoever if you buy OLD WEST *regularly.* This goes, of course, for TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES, too. If everybody bought each issue of all three magazines regularly, we could add 100,000 to the print order of all three and stop crying like a donkey with asafetida in his eye!

FLASH! OLD WEST WILL BE AN "ALL NEW" MAGAZINE AFTER ABOUT TWO MORE ISSUES. We'll be "caught up" on the old issues of TRUE WEST. I want to tell you more about this as well as the confusion of other magazines copying our format, titles almost like ours, and everything else we got. We are getting piles and piles of these letters and, without *one single exception* yet, they tell us that these magazines are copying everything but the *excellence* and *authenticity* of our three titles. They are giving instances of people who buy these magazines and think they are buying ours.

Now, we don't want to fight competition. We have never had to. We never intend to start it. Top-notch competition is a healthy thing. However, our readers are urging us to adopt some insignia, slogan, or *something* that will point out immediately that TRUE WEST, FRONTIER TIMES and OLD WEST are published by the same company. Then, if people want to read the other magazines—fine. If they want to read ours, they'll know they're getting ours!

One reader writes in and suggests a contest with about 100 prizes. What do you think? We wish the other publishers would start a contest and identify *their* magazines also! This man says that the "fringe" readers, as well as newcomers, get fooled constantly and he points out any number of examples. So let us know what you think—there are problems for all of us all the time and all we know to do is what we've done in the past—lower our heads and tie into them like a biting sow!—Hosstail.

So You Think You Know The West

ANSWERS:

1. **Mouse trap.**
   Harold Warp's Pioneer Village, Minden, Nebraska
2. **Homemade scales.**
   Wichita Historical Museum, Wichita, Kansas
3. **Starch maker (to pulverize potatoes).**
   Warp's Pioneer Village, Minden, Nebraska
4. **Toast tongs.**
   V. Reynolds collection
5. **Homemade sausage stuffer.**
   Sheridan Co. (Nebr.) Historical Society, Rushville, Nebraska
6. **Grease-burning foot warmer.**
   Sandhills Museum, Valentine, Nebraska
7. **Scrubbing boards (common 1800s).**
   Johnny Johnson Collection, Wichita, Kansas
8. **Steam canner, or cold canner.**
   Sandhills Museum, Valentine, Nebraska
9. **Boot jack.**
   Beeson Museum, Dodge City, Kansas
10. **Tatting shuttle.**
    Author's collection
11. **Carpenter's plane (common design).**
    Mrs. J. E. Moore collection
12. **Cherokee Strip canteens—made from pie tins.**
    Harbaugh Museum, Wellington, Kansas

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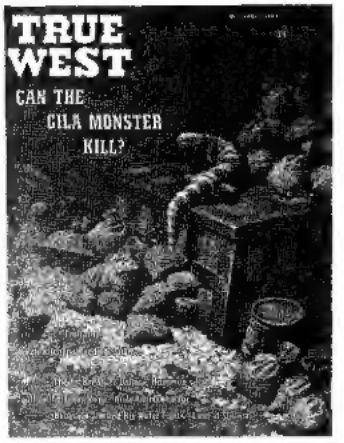

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PARTIAL CONTENTS

- Branding Irons
- Chuck Wagon Boxes
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- Pistols and Rifles
- Wells, Fargo, Items
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